



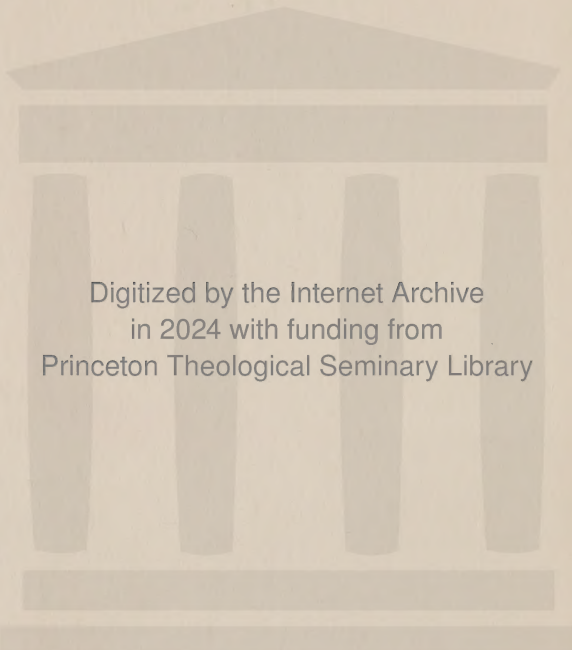


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The great consummation





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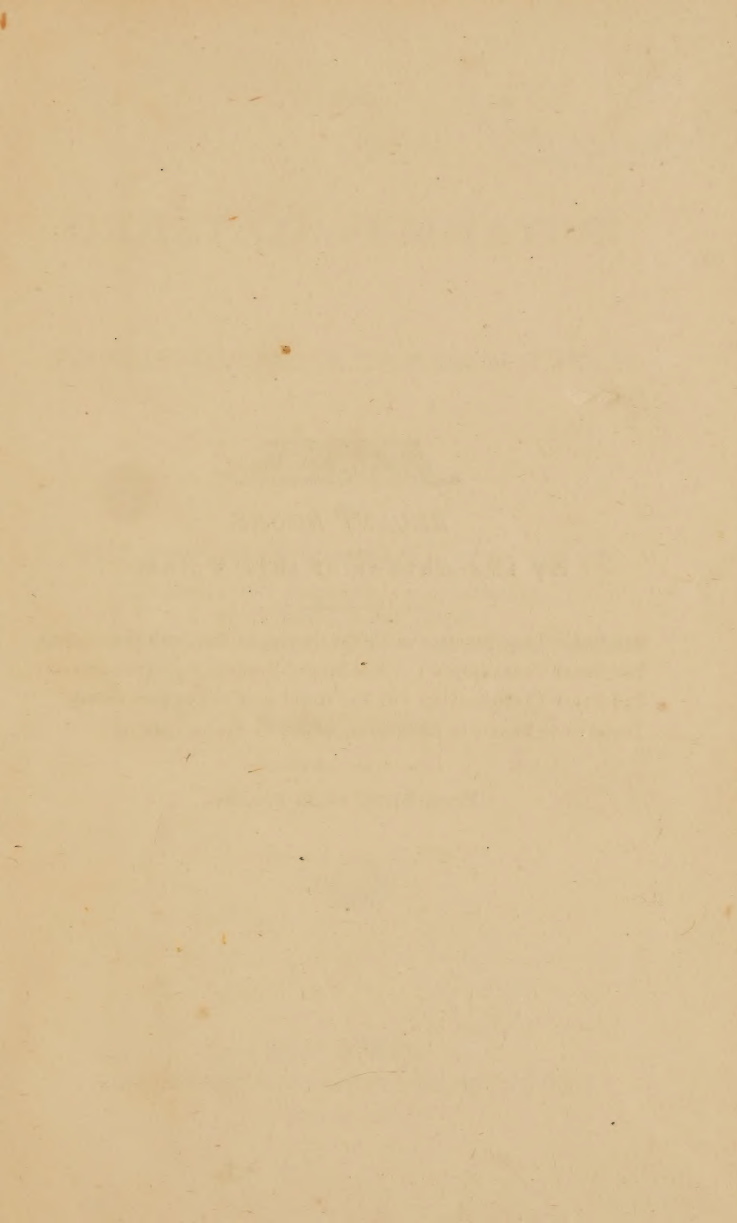
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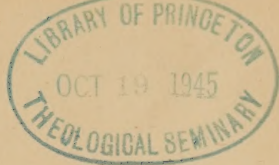
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# GREAT CONSUMMATION.

THE MILLENNIAL REST; OR, THE WORLD AS IT WILL BE.

BY

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## PUBLISHER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE success which attended the publication in this country of Rev. Dr. Cumming's "GREAT TRIBULATION," and "GREAT PREPARATION," has called forth a uniform edition of his present concluding work, which, like its predecessors, has been divided into two series or volumes, presenting a more open and readable appearance than the small type and contracted page of the London edition. The character and contents of the discourses are entitled to the earnest attention of every Christian mind. In the words of a religious contemporary, "Their tendency is not so much to alarm as to awaken. The fulfilment of prophecy, the probabilities of the near approach of the end, are not spread out in dramatic or didactic terrors to produce sensation, but are everywhere treated of with a deep and solemn earnestness, and always for the one purpose of making an application of the important injunction, '*Be ye therefore ready.*' We admire the simplicity of the author's style; he is nowhere 'learned' nor ambiguous. We believe that his work is written with a conscientious desire to 'win souls,' and we should not hesitate to put it into the hands of our children, believing that the idiosyncrasy of the writer is less apparent than the Bible truth he deals with and so pointedly proclaims."



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# THE GREAT CONSUMMATION;

OR,

## THE WORLD AS IT WILL BE.

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### LECTURE I.

#### THE WORLD THAT WILL HAVE NO SORROW.

BREAKING and broken hearts — weary limbs and weeping eyes — are this life's daily experience. The long sisterhood of sorrow still stretches onward. It will not be always so, for

“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow.”— *Revelation xxi. 4.*

WE have learned something of the nature of the new heaven and the new earth which are to supersede the heavens and the earth which are now about us. We have also read of the holy city that comes down from heaven, and settles a magnificent vision upon the bosom of this earth, beautiful and adorned as a bride adorned for her husband ; in which shall shine a glory that shall never fade, and from which shall rise songs that shall never cease ; in which all hearts shall be bounding and no heart shall break for ever. We have also learned the mystery

and the meaning of that promise: "The tabernacle of God is with men;" or if it had been written in Hebrew it would have been: The *shechinah* is returned; the bright glory that dwelt between the cherubim, and was to the ancient Jew the apocalypse of Deity; the evidence and the proof that God was there shall return in more than its ancient effulgence, and be such a light that the city shall have "no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God," — that is, the *shechinah*, — "the glory of God did lighten it; and" — magnificent thought! that shows how soft, and tempered, and beautiful that light will be — "the Lamb is the light thereof."

The next predicted feature in the world that will be is a most precious one to weeping eyes, to sorrowful hearts, to suffering mankind. And if there be any in this world ignorant enough to deny that they are sinners, we never find one who will deny that man is a sufferer. A poet has said that "man is born to weep." So far it is true he is born to weep; but he was not originally made to weep. If sin had not touched the heart, and opened the flood-gates of tears, we had not needed the promise to cheer us: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." The Greek word translated "wipe away" is most expressive; it is *εξαλεψει*: literally, he will "wipe out all tears from their eyes." It is an interesting fact that the Hebrew word for the eye is also the Hebrew word for a fountain; as if tears since sin was introduced had become the spontaneous and ceaseless exponents of the existence and the depth of the fountain of sorrow that is within. It is this thought that the eye and the fountain are the same in Hebrew that gives such beauty to the words of Jeremiah, the sorrowful prophet: "Oh that my

head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears." The original is exquisitely beautiful: Oh that my eye were what it also means — a fountain — "that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." A day comes, according to this promise, when not simply God will dry the tear — time may do that — but when he will render tears impossible; unless it be that tears are sometimes shed from excess of joy; he will extinguish all tears of sorrow; he will make the fountain no more well up from the depths of the heart those bitter waters of which the eye is the channel, and which express faintly what they cannot represent fully, the sorrow that may be felt but cannot be said. He will wipe out the tears from all eyes. There is a beautiful passage in the 7th chapter of the Book of Revelation: "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." It is an exquisitely touching thought that God should bow the heavens to wipe away the tear from a poor, sinful, sorrowing man's eye. That only reminds one of another exquisite touch in the Book of Genesis, where it says: "God said to Noah, get thee into the ark;" and then it is said: "And God shut him in." What a thought, that God's own hand shut the door, and thus secured the safety of his thoughtless, his sinful, and yet his adopted child! So in another passage, exquisitely beautiful, when that day comes, "God shall wipe away all tears from all eyes." What tears have fallen since poor Eve went forth from Paradise, bedewing the rose that she held in her hand with the tears of her eyes! what tears have been shed since that day! Perhaps tears mitigate and dilute the grief they cannot represent. There

most poignant of all ; but sorrow, by a law of our nature, does usually find expression in tears. In the world that will be all tears shall cease to fall, because there will be no sting in the heart, no ache in the head, no thorn in the pillow, no feebleness in the limbs. Grief shall give place to joy, and all shall rejoice in God their exceeding joy. But it is one of the peculiar laws of our nature that God has introduced, that while sorrow entered our world by the gap — or rather shall I say, by the breach that sin had made? — it has been sanctified by God to the good, the happiness, the improvement, and the elevation of human hearts. It is the peculiar feature of Christianity, in our present economy, that it does not extinguish by a blow the fruits of the fall, but that it takes these fruits and makes them ministries of good. Sickness is a fruit of sin ; but how often do we learn upon a sick bed lessons that we never would learn from a pulpit ! Old age is a fruit of sin ; but how often does the strong man bowing, the eyes becoming dim, the ears becoming deaf to the voice of the daughters of music, preach to us the lesson that we can scarcely help listening to, that the body must go the way of all flesh, and the spirit must go the way of all spirits, upward and onward to Him who is its Redeemer and its Lord ! So again, sorrow and tears, which were introduced by sin, are not extinguished by grace, though they will be in glory ; but they are sweetened, and sanctified, and diluted by grace, and made ministries of beneficence and progress to us. Hence the Saviour says : “ In the world ye shall have tribulation ; ” and again : “ If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him ; ” and again : “ Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven.” There is not a Christian

on his way to heaven who does not sometimes meet with springs of sorrow ; who does not sometimes feel the road to be very steep, the flints very sharp, and think his Father's house very far off. There is not one who has on him the mark and the superscription of the Blessed Master who has not drunk at some time, and if he has not yet drunk he will yet have to drink of sorrow's bitter cup ; perhaps that he may long for that day when there shall be no more tears, and that, weary with the march of life, and yearning for the rest that remaineth, he may set his heart not amidst treasures that wither up like grass, but amidst those treasures which no moth can corrupt, no thief can steal, no time can waste, and no rust can destroy.

When a Christian suffers, just because a Christian, he feels often more keenly than the men of the world itself. A Christian is not exempted from sorrow : on the contrary, his sensibilities are often the keenest, his nature the most susceptible, just because the Christian will not have resource to the narcotics to which the world flies to dry its tears and to make it forget the sorrow. But then the Christian has, on the other hand, compensatory elements. Down into the depths of his sorrow descend relieving elements that mingle or abate his tears, and dilute more than half their bitterness ; and he knows that sorrows which to the world are opaque, and which it has no means of interpreting, are to him all luminous with lessons, teaching him this — that there is not an accidental tear on a human cheek, that there is not an accidental or fortuitous pang in a human heart ; that all is part of a grand and blessed mystery ; that all is contributing to his purification, his progress, his happiness ; and that heaven will feel so sweet just because time has been so bitter, and its troubles so many, and its winds so stormy.



“ We see but dimly through the mists and vapors  
Amid these earthly damps ;  
What seem to us but sad funereal tapers  
May be heaven’s distant lamps.”

Sorrow is in its measure in a Christian’s heart the evidence of a future. Man is the heir of an eternity on which he immediately enters after death, and of a world he takes possession of at the resurrection. Sorrow, poignant as it may be, is one of the marks of the greatness, the dignity — shall I say the future destiny ? — of man. The birds of the air, the beasts of the field, know what pain is ; that is a very vulgar and a very common thing ; but they do not know what sorrow is. It is a mark of the greatness of humanity that it can weep ; and thus the depth of our sorrow may have in it the depth of the fullness of that hope that maketh not ashamed. Our capacity of sorrow so far suggests to the mind the assurance of its ultimate deliverance. The deep, dark shadow on a human heart, when deepest, broadest, darkest, proves because it is a shadow that there is sunshine somewhere. The very power, therefore, to feel sorrow is a proof of our greatness ; and the depth and poignancy of the sorrow that human hearts have felt, which most of us can only fancy, having in God’s providence perhaps never fathomed it, is the evidence of something grander within and nobler beyond. There are secret sorrows that gnaw the heart like a worm in the bud — there are griefs, encysted griefs, that language cannot tell ; that tears dilute perhaps, but cannot waste and do away with : that like a bullet in a veteran’s body cannot be extracted. The scar left by a wound upon the body heals ; but a grief left upon the heart through some great sorrow, in consequence of some bitter loss, will never perhaps be effaced until

that day when God shall wipe away all tears from all eyes, and the scar on the body and the grief on the heart shall be lost and dissolved for ever amidst that fulness of joy which is at God's right hand and those pleasures that are for ever and ever.

Sorrow as a Christian ministry in this world exercises a sweetening and a softening influence on the human heart. Many of the songs of the future will have derived their tone from sorrows that were suffered upon earth. We shall bless God through endless ages for the grief that was so bitter while it lasted, but that has been so blessed in its effects and influences upon our hearts. What the dews do to the roots of flowers tears do for the graces of a Christian heart. It is in the shadow of a great loss, or bitter bereavement, that all the beauty of the earth fades, and all the gilding of life departs, that things seen look so mean and so poor, and that the sun sets behind the hills; but in the darkness of that grief there is revealed what the sun leaves when he sets, the starry sky that reminds us of the city of God, of the many mansions, of the house that hath foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God. The brightest flowers in heaven have had their roots struck deepest in sorrow. Sorrow in a Christian's heart when it is sanctified never sours; it often saddens, it always solemnizes. Therefore, when seized by grace, it becomes a ministry of beneficence; it refines and purifies our nature; and the holiest, and the happiest, and the most exalted in the upper world are those "that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and therefore are before the throne."

Sorrow as a ministry of the Gospel has a transforming effect upon others who go to sympathise with it, and to

minister to the sufferer. I do not know which gets greatest good; he that goes to comfort another in sorrow or the suffering person that is himself comforted. It is a beautiful law in the animal world that a wounded animal will draw other animals round it in sympathy, as if to suffer with it. A wound in the body instantly makes all the resources of the system rush to that place to heal it. And wherever there is a sufferer there are always some sympathisers, who may not be able, in the beautiful language of this passage, to wipe away the tears, but who may be able to say a word that will soothe like music. When under the shadow of a great affliction you feel language is so imperfect and so worthless, and the silent look of sympathy is often the richest and the deepest consolation of all. No man ever left the house of mourning where he went to minister to others, and to mitigate their grief, and to hear the story of their agony, without going away a better, not a sadder, but a more solemnised spirit. And hence, it is a duty — but if I say duty, that is a very cold estimate of it indeed — it is a privilege, it is profit, to weep with them that weep, to rejoice with them that rejoice. It is said by the great Master: "It is more blessed to give than to receive;" and if one may vary the expression, it is yet more blessed to receive by giving. Sorrow not only refines the nature of the sorrowing sufferer, but it does good to others; and lessons that have been preached from a weeping household have lived, and lasted, and transformed, while lessons preached by an eloquent preacher have fallen dead upon the heart, or have been heard as the idle wind that men do not regard.

Sorrow reveals to the sufferer his inward character. It is the best moral assayer. It washes off films from the heart. It is when we lie in the shadow of trouble, or in

sorrow, or in suffering of any sort, that we begin to take a look into what is very frequently, and more or less so with all of us, a *terra incognita* — our own hearts. Though the introspective study of the heart is not the way of salvation, yet it is the way of a very wholesome and occasional practical and personal profit on our part. When steeped in sorrow we look within, and see what we are, and discover what we are made of. Then, too, our Christianity is put to the test. The hurricane enables you to estimate the depths to which the roots of the oak have struck; the gale of wind on the ocean helps you to measure the strength and value of the ship that weathers it; and great trouble helps you to ascertain whether you have any anchorage-ground out of and above this world. The man whose only anchorage for his heart is in this present world will be swept away by the first hurricane or overwhelmed by the first wave; but that Christian, however humble, poor, or mean, whose anchorage-ground is by the Rock of Ages, will ride safe in the midst of the greatest storm, and discover by his triumph over it, when the waves have been laid and the winds have been hushed, that his strength is in the Rock of Ages, that his refuge is in God. Earth's darkest shadow arises from heaven's brightest light. The disappearance of gems on earth is owing to God making up his jewels in heaven.

Sorrow has a purifying effect. The apostle says: "Though no tribulation for the present seemeth joyous, yet afterwards it worketh the peaceable fruits of righteousness." David says: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." The steel derives its temper from the fire; gold derives its elasticity from the hammer; and the Christian gathers many of his best qualities from the furnace in which God's grace places him, and in which he

keeps him just as long as may be most expedient for him. You may have read the story of the refiner of gold and the Christian. The latter beheld the former looking always into the melting-pot in the furnace; he asked the refiner why he did so: he said he was melting gold, and that ever as the mere refuse rose to the surface he skimmed it off and put it aside; and then he said, as soon as I can see my own face reflected in the molten gold, I am then satisfied it has been long enough in the fire. Perhaps God deals in some such way with his choicest and his best ones; he keeps you in suffering just till he sees his own bright features reflected from your poor heart, and as soon as he discovers these, the suffering ceases, the furnace is put out, and the gold is coined to currency on earth or shaped into a diadem for the great Master to wear hereafter.

“ The night brings forth the morn ;  
Of the cloud is the lightning born ;  
From darkest earth the brightest roses grow ;  
Bright sparks from black flints fly,  
And from out a leaden sky  
Comes the silvery-footed spirit of the snow.”

All true sorrow has in it what the Germans call a *Heimweh*; that is, a home feeling; a longing or yearning, or desire for home. If this world were all sunshine — if your heart were always bounding — if there never was a black shadow on your sky, nor a thorn in your pillow, nor a grief in your heart, nor an ache in your body, nor mists gathering upon your eyes, nor the hair whitening with the light of the approaching eternity to which you are going — you would begin to say, This world is our home. One often feels for those who have all this world's glad things, great things, and bright things, and have few of



its trials, its sorrows, and its griefs. But when we are the subjects and the sufferers of varied afflictions that come as waves in succession ; when we are constrained to say with David, " All thy billows go over me," we then begin to have this Heimweh, this longing for home, this yearning for the world that will be, this desire for something that will satisfy the deepest thirst of our nature. It is the mark of the frailty of man that he seeks to satisfy his soul with trash ; but it is the stamp of his grandeur and his greatness that all that is in the world never can satisfy it. And perhaps those who reach its sunniest heights and are possessed of its choicest blessings, if we knew their hearts as we know our own, like Alexander the Macedonian conquer, who swept the world in his victorious career, sit down and weep — as he wept because there was no other world to conquer, so they that have gained the world weep because there is not another world to possess and enjoy. Thus the sorrow that is sent now gives us a desire for something better. As the old lamps of earth go out the stars of the sky break forth ; and as the gilding of time is worn off, the glory of heaven settles upon the heart and soul of man. The sorrow that deepens within us a longing for heaven is a blessed baptism.

Sorrow is sweetened and softened by the thought, that when we suffer we are walking specially with Jesus. What was his emphatic name ? The name that expressed so much — the Man of Sorrows. And what does the apostle say ? " If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." We know that in this world the greatest natures, the noblest spirits, are the most sensitive to sorrow. That eternal Sun looked on earth through a mist of tears. And when we think what was the greatness of Him who is God manifest in the flesh ; what was the purity of his

nature — such a contrast to the impurity of others ; that he saw sin with eyes with which God alone can look upon it ; we may conceive what was the greatness of his sorrow ; and we may sometimes feel that while no sorrow of ours is expiatory, no grief atoning, yet it must be some comfort that we are treading the same wine-press ; that we are walking on the same rugged road ; that, like him that took a part of old in carrying the cross, we are bearing the cross our Master bare before ; and so far we have the evidence in our experience, or rather the evidence in our heart, that we are suffering with him, and that with him we too shall reign and rejoice together. Sorrow, in this present dispensation, is the ally of truth. It best reveals to us, next to the Spirit of God, the meaning of the Bible. Was it not when you had lost some near one or some dear one, or when you were in very great sorrow, that you read the Bible with a zest with which you never read it before ; and that when beside the dust, the silent dust, of them that you loved ; or when under some great and bitter bereavement, you opened the Gospel of St. John and read these words : “ In my Father’s house are many mansions ; I go to prepare a place for you ; let not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me ” — did not the old familiar sound that had fallen upon your ears so often, so hard, suddenly become enriched with a music, and pervaded by a sweetness, and accompanied with an emphasis that made them descend to the very depths of your heart ; and prove to you, as you never learned before, that there is in that Word of God a majesty, a consolation, a power, a glory, that all lay latent ; and that God was there, though never till then did you discover it ? It is in the darkness of sorrow, it is in the silence of bereavement, that we learn to see and hear

God ; and that in the Bible we find God as we never found him before. But sorrow, as I have said, in its origin is evil ; only when touched by the Saviour's hand does it become sweetening, sanctifying, improving. A day comes when this sorrow will not be needed ; when this discipline will be superseded ; because we shall be perfect even as Christ himself is perfect. In the world that will be, Marys and Marthas will no more weep because a brother dies, or join the procession of the lengthening sisterhood of human sufferers. Then there will be no more Rachels weeping for their children because they are not. The wine will no more fail at bridal feasts, and light after light will no more go out in happy homes ; marble halls will no more be silent, and hearths will no more grow cold ; but broken ties shall be reknit ; lost links shall be found ; all hearts shall bound, and no heart shall break ; for we shall be where there is fullness of joy, and where there are pleasures for ever. What a blessed thought ! not that there shall be no more sorrow, for that is the least part of it, but that there shall be no more necessity for the discipline of sorrow ; no more pride to be humbled, no more covetousness to be dissolved, no more earthliness to be broken up, no more evil to be extracted from our nature ; for we shall then be holy as he is holy, and therefore happy as he is happy. It is a glorious prospect : " There shall be no more sorrow." And what does that imply ? That there shall be no more sin. Sin is not part of our world ; it is not a perpetuity ; it is an intruder ; it is an interloper ; and it shall be expunged from creation, and extracted from every atom of the whole earth ; and then our tears shall be dried up, and sorrow shall disappear from every heart ; and there shall be, what some one sings so well : —

“ No sickness there,  
No weary wasting of the frame away,  
No fearful shrinking from the midnight air,  
No hidden grief.

“ Let us depart,  
If home like this await the weary soul :  
Look up, thou stricken one, thy wounded heart  
Shall bleed no more at sorrow's stern control.

“ With faith our guide,  
White-robed and innocent, to tread the way,  
Why fear to plunge in Jordan's rolling tide,  
And find the haven of eternal day ? ”

## LECTURE II.

### THE DEATH OF DEATH.

PAIN and death will be annihilated in the world to come. They were not inmates of Eden. They are intruders on earth. They will be exiles in the Paradise that is to be, for

“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain ; for the former things are passed away.”—*Revelation, xxi. 4.*

I HAVE already explained the prophecy: “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” I showed how actual it must be, because God has said it: “There shall be no more sorrow, nor crying.” I will now try to show how equally certain is the prophecy or rather the promise: “There shall be no more pain, nor death.” But what I would endeavor first of all to show is, that pain and death in consequence of sin are not only penalties attached to it, but that they have become necessary

and expedient, and are so far merciful in a fallen and a sinful world. Of course pain and death were not originally meant to be ; and undeniably their introduction into our orb and their action in our economy are the products and the direct results of sin, But while so introduced, we shall find by a careful analysis of their action that both of them have received into them gleams of beneficence and love ; and whilst we hear in the words, " In the day thou eatest thou shalt die," the sentence of the Judge, we can hear ringing in it the under-tone of the loving-kindness and the sympathy of a Father also.

Let me show that pain, the sister of death, introduced with death in consequence of sin, is overruled to be by God's interposing goodness a ministry of beneficence in our existing economy. What is pain ? The telegraphic despatch sent to the mind intimating that some part of our physical economy is in peril, and that it is time to pay attention to it. It is the warning voice to take heed, to see if something be not wrong, and to take the steps that lead to its reparation. A gifted writer and hard student said to one of his friends in the language he thought of great joy, and he hoped on the part of his friend it would be met by corresponding congratulation : " I have at last got rid of all my headaches." The answer of his friend was this : " I am sorry for you ; you have got rid of the safety-valves — prepare for an explosion ;" as much as to say that these headaches were the evidence of too intense application ; and if the application or the study continued, and the safety-valves were closed, or the headaches did not give despatches intimating that the application was too intense, he might prepare for destruction, that is death. Children play so boisterously, and roughly, and recklessly — and it is always the sign of health when they do



so — that if they were not warned by the sense of pain most children would kill themselves in childhood. But the sense of pain tells them, You must not run so fast, you must not push so hard, you must not wrestle so violently ; and thus the pain that sin introduced is turned by God into a warning ministry of beneficence conducive to the safety and the protection of human life. A mote floats on the sunbeam, touches the sensitive eye ; instinctively that sense of pain makes the eyelid close without your thinking of it, and the eye is protected from greater injury ; and thus what sin introduced is made a ministry of beneficence, or the means of protecting and preserving that life which if no warning was given would be every hour in jeopardy. There is a very precious lesson taught us in connection with pain : those who have never felt the intensest pain — I speak not from experience but from information — have never, it is supposed, experienced the intensest pleasure. Archdeacon Paley, one of the most acute and admirable writers, speaking on this very subject, makes the following sensible and just remark : “ Pain is seldom violent and long continued ; and its pauses and its intermissions become positive pleasure. It has the power of shedding a satisfaction and ease which I believe few enjoy. A man resting from a fit of gout is for the time in possession of feelings which in undisturbed health he never could enjoy. I am far from being sure that man is not a gainer by suffering a moderate interruption of bodily ease for a couple of hours in the course of every twenty-four.” That seems a very hard saying, and yet I suspect there is some truth in it. “ Two very common observations,” says the Archdeacon, “ favor this opinion : one is, that remission of pain calls forth from those who experience it stronger expressions of satisfac-



tion and gratitude towards the author of relief; and the second is, that the spirits of sick men do not sink in proportion to the acuteness of their suffering, but rather appear to be invigorated and sustained not by the pain, but by the high degree of comfort which they derive on the cessation of the pain." Now we see in this God's goodness surviving the fall, and breaking out where it had been wholly forfeited. Thus pain, the offspring of the sin of man, is so tenderly touched and overruled by God that it becomes in one aspect of its ministry a source of positive and peculiar pleasure. But then, a day comes when there will be no more pain because no more peril. Pleasures that never pall; joys that have no satiety; blessings no longer in the bosom of a curse, will be the everlasting enjoyment; there shall be fulness of joy and pleasures that are for evermore. But it is most interesting to notice (and we are apt to overlook these things) that even in the curse there is embosomed a benediction; and that God never smites in his anger without administering corresponding, and softening, and remedial joys in his mercy, sympathy, and love.

Let us look at the eldest daughter of sin, namely, death. "There shall be no more death." You say, naturally, surely it would be a blessing to us if people did not now die. I am not sure of that. If the millennium were come it would indeed be a blessing, and it will then be a fact, an everlasting fact, for there shall be no more death. But death, the offspring of sin, is in this world, and among a sinful population, a most expedient if not a necessary thing. Suppose for instance, an avaricious man living for ever, and hoarding for ever; absorbing as a vortex, never giving forth like a fountain; he would become a monster and a calamity on the earth.

We have all read of a remarkable will case, where the testator left a will to the effect that his vast estates should be vested in trustees, with directions to accumulate for a hundred years. But what was discovered by financiers? That in a little time it would absorb the whole floating capital of the realm. And the House of Lords not many years ago interfered and violently broke the will, to avoid a monetary and financial catastrophe. Now suppose that this man instead of dying should have lived; suppose he should have lived for hundreds of years; if he had adhered to the purport embodied in his will in the course of a short time he would have absorbed, in the language of the statesmen who discussed the subject, the whole floating capital of the realm. Death was therefore necessary; it broke up the trust, and the monopoly of one became the property of thousands. What does that show? That death is expedient, as long as there are passions in the human heart and sinners in our world. In our existing economy death is the great ally of peace. The grave is a real Peace Society. Suppose Napoleon the First had lived to the present day: the nations would have still lived in awe of him; his very name, as said in that magnificent poem written by a poetess who has recently gone to her rest, Mrs. Barrett Browning: "Crowned and buried, his name shook the old casements of the world." Suppose that this great scourge of the nations still lived, the nations would have been kept in a state of ceaseless fever, providing for war, neglecting and overlooking the great demands and necessities of internal progress. But death interposed; the conqueror of Austerlitz became a chained eagle on the desert rock of St. Helena; death finished his ambition and the fears of the world together; and now the certainty of death binds over the nations to

keep the peace, and helps to convince them that the penalty of its infraction is their life here and possibly their happiness hereafter. We thus see that death, the offspring and the introduction of sin, in our present world and in our present condition, is expedient. We have a striking historic proof of the justice of what I am now stating in the antediluvian age. When men lived to a thousand years; when, for instance, Adam was able to speak with Methuselah, and Methuselah with Noah, so that these three men could embrace 2000 years, what do we find was the condition of society? "The whole earth was filled with violence," and "the wickedness of man was great upon the earth." And what became necessary? God sent the scourging flood from the heights of the sky, and out of the depths of the earth, and swept off the world the guilty and the blaspheming generation; and to show that the length of human life had been found to be a calamity, he shortened man's life to the period of a hundred and twenty years, which it ought still to be, and if man perhaps were as careful as he ought to be might in many cases still be — the normal length of human life — a hundred and twenty years. There is no record of life being shortened since; and the reason that it is shorter may be that man is more reckless, and careless, and thoughtless than he ought to be. Although it is remarkable that as medicine and medical skill and science advance its length advances also, for the insurance offices will tell you that during the last forty years man's life on the whole has lengthened — including of course lives saved that used to be lost — some six or eight years; showing that there is more in one's own management and care than some are disposed to admit. Thus death is expedient in a fallen world. Everlasting life in the midst of a world in which

sin abounds and frequently dominates would be a calamity to the possessor and probably a curse to the rest of mankind. But death has mercy and love in it, and a blessing about it, in that it ends the oppression of the oppressor and terminates the sufferings of the oppressed. In the beautiful language of Job, language exquisitely poetical, but on that account not the less true: "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master." As long then as there is sin in our world, and suffering the consequence of that sin, death comes a beneficent messenger to relieve the slave in the Dismal Swamp from the oppressive master whose chains can no longer bind him, and to introduce the captive in the dungeons of Austria to a freedom that kings cannot give and that tyrants cannot take away. And when we remember that there are inner troubles that make men often feel what perhaps it is sinful to say, with one of old, "I am weary of life," and with the prophet Jonah, "It is better to die than to live," death becomes welcome. Because there are no dungeons, and chains, and oppressors, and oppressions in England, it does not follow that there are no sufferings in it to make it desirable for death to put an end to. There are secret sorrows in the most sensitive hearts; there are bitter griefs that language does not speak; there are troubles whose shadows on the soul no sunshine disperses; disappointed and broken hearts no tears relieve and no time binds up; and suffering and sad ones who would court death like a bride, and desire the day that sets them free from the shackles and the restraints of this mortal life as the brightest and the best that passes over their history. As long as these

things exist, so long death has mercy in it, though it be the offspring of sin.

Death teaches another very important lesson that we need in this world of ours, the vanity and the uncertainty of all that is in it. If men — I am speaking of a fallen world; the world as it now is — lived for ever on this earth, I believe one would worship money, and another would worship honors, and another would worship health, and another would worship beauty, and another would worship science, and every one would worship something; and universal idolatry or rather atheism would be the general condition and creed of mankind. But now we see that all the brightest things in this world are the most precarious and the fleetest; we learn by experience that the laurels may remain green, but that the poet dies; that the honors may be perpetuated, but that the possessor must go — his body the way of all flesh and his soul the way of all spirits. Princes, prime ministers, millionaires, must die; and the very thought that they must die tends to make them hold their property with a less tenacious grasp, and feel what they would not otherwise feel: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, and the fashion of the world speedily passeth away." I do not say it teaches this lesson always, because there are hearts that no lessons reach, and that nothing but the almighty love of God himself can melt and subdue; but the general impression of the fading nature of all things, and the general result of the conviction that, if the estate is not taken from the proprietor, the proprietor must be taken from the estate, does deaden our interest in earthly things, and prompt the question, is there anything better, brighter, more satisfying, more enduring, beyond? and



lead perhaps to the next and necessary question, what must I do to be saved?

Thus there are in death mitigating elements that relieve the intensity of the penalty, and prove that in our present economy of things, and conditioned as the world is, death is a most expedient and necessary intruder. But even in dying itself there are intermingling elements of mercy. It does strike one as most kind in our God and Father, that when he pronounced the curse which we had most justly provoked he included, though then concealed, many interpenetrating and relieving blessings in it; and when he said what man should endure because man had sinned, he stayed, in the beautiful language of the prophet, his rough wind in the day of his east wind; and in the midst of judgment he remembered mercy. One of the mitigating and relieving lights in the darkness of the shadow of death is, with the certainty that it will come, the uncertainty when, where, and how it will come. If we knew death to be absolutely certain at a fixed day, all nervous energy would be depressed, and the world would die of sickness, helplessness, despair. Some of you may have read that remarkable experiment made by Frederick William the Third of Prussia. Six persons were condemned to death for murder, and of course they deserved to die; he resolved at the request of his physicians to make an experiment with them; three of them were put into beds in which cholera patients had died, but were not told anything about it; the other three were put into beds perfectly clean, in which cholera patients had never been; but they were told: "You are put in beds in which the victims of cholera have just expired." The result was, the three that were put in the tainted beds did not die;

the three that were laid in pure, clean beds died. Why? Because they believed death certain, and the depression of the anticipation crushed life at its centre and it sunk.

It is a well-known fact that persons have died of fright when death has become to them absolutely certain. When Saul heard he was to be killed in the approaching battle he was paralyzed and struck down to the earth. I remember in the college at which I graduated hearing the story of a sacristan, who was very fond of informing the professors of the misdemeanors of the students, perhaps in the exercise of his duty. The students were exasperated against him, and one day told him that they had doomed him to death. They blindfolded him in the large college hall, after spreading sawdust on the floor, and then informed him that they meant to decapitate him. One of the students drew a wet cloth across his throat, and he died instantly on the spot; the fear of death making death actual. God in his great mercy does not usually give us warning of death, nor information when we shall die. Were the mother to be told that the beautiful infant that smiles for the first time on her lap, on a certain day and in a certain hour should be carried like a faded flower to the house appointed for all the living, her exertions in keeping up the health of her babe would be paralyzed. Were the bride told that on a certain hour, on a certain day, she would be a widow, her bridal joy would all be blighted, and joyous moments would be barely possible.

It is, therefore, a happy element intermingling with a penal sentence, that while death is certain and we must die, the time, the place, and the circumstances are uncertain; and therefore man's energy is not broken, nor his spirits disturbed, nor his labors for himself and for those that are connected with him interfered with and destroyed.



There is also one other mitigating element in death ; and one loves to contemplate these things, because they show how even in what might have been supposed to be, as it was deserved, unmitigated judgment there break forth redeeming and brilliant lights of mercy and of loving-kindness, as if the Sun of Righteousness had risen on the curse. We all shrink from death ; perhaps we do no wrong in this ; but I believe that in dying there is not that pain that people sometimes think. Were death in its pure judicial aspect to strike, the agony of dissolution would be terrible as the result itself would be awful ; but God mitigates the penalty by deadening the sensibilities of man to the pain ; and many a one from a slight headache or a toothache suffers vastly more than man suffers in what is called commonly the agony of death. An illustrative story is told by Dr. Adam Clarke, in a letter to Dr. Lettsom, a physician of his day. It appears that Dr. Adam Clarke was, it might almost be said, drowned ; his own words are : “ I was once drowned. In being so, first of all I felt no pain whatever ; secondly, I did not for a moment lose my consciousness ; thirdly, I felt indescribable happiness ; and though dead as relates to the total suspension of all my physical functions, yet I felt no pain in dying whatever, but was unspeakably happy ; and fourthly, I only felt pain when efforts were made to restore me, and I began to breathe again.” As if in dying there was no pain, and consciousness was unaffected and unimpaired. May not all these mitigating elements thrown into death, softening its nature, lighting up its aspect, be not only memorials of mercy mingling with the curse, but incipient prophecies and earnestings that that curse will one day be utterly removed ? Does it not appear from all these considerations as I have said that the

Father is felt in the Judge ; that mercy sparkles in retribution ; and that a few beams from Paradise restored shot into Paradise lost, mitigate the calamity that would otherwise have crushed and overwhelmed ?

But when it says here, "There shall be no more death," let us remember that in the case of a Christian it is only after all the body that dies ; his new birth is the inauguration of everlasting life ; and when he dies it is not he — I might say with the poet —

"It is not he, but death that dies !"

and at all events it is not he, but the clothing, or the body that he lays aside to be folded up in the grave, there to rest till raised incorruptible and glorious at the resurrection morn. Thus in a Christian's case there is no real death ; there is only the death of the body. The promise therefore is that even this humiliating law shall be repealed ; that death shall be expelled from the grave ; that a voice shall ring through marble mausolea, through monuments of bronze, beneath green sods in village churchyards and on battle-fields, and in the depths of the desert sea : "O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?" corruptible put on incorruptible ; mortal put on immortality ; let death now be swallowed up in everlasting victory.

When death comes to us now, it is a relief to be rid of the passions that infest the body, from the slavery and the tyranny of the senses over all the faculties and the affections of the soul, and to be free of the universe, the enfranchised of heaven, the heirs of God and the joint-heirs of Christ Jesus. At that day a glorious change will pass upon this poor body of ours. There is reason to believe that we have scarcely an idea of what matter

was from what matter now is. From the loveliest rose that blooms in the garden, and wastes its sweetness on the desert air, down to the humblest weed that grows by the way-side, a great degeneracy has taken place. From the noblest specimen of humanity down to the humblest and the lowest, as in the case of the negro, there is a terrible deterioration. We know not by anything we now see, unless by the glimpse of glory which the Master left behind him when he rose from the Mount of Olives, and the cloud received him out of sight, into what shapes of beauty, into what media of light, into what mirrors of loveliness, all creation will be wrought when God shall make all things new, and Paradise shall be restored and a new world will dawn. The chrysalis worm — the repulsive chrysalis worm — gives no idea of the beautiful butterfly into which it is to be developed. The seed that rots and moulders in the earth gives faint foresight of the fair and fragrant blossom that will bloom upon it in summer. So this frail, sick, dying, shattered body of ours, in which are so many fissures and clefts caused by sin — this body of ours, which is sometimes almost broken to pieces by the convulsive efforts of the spirit to escape from its thralldom, and to taste the freedom wherewith Christ makes his people free, when raised from the dead shall be all beauty, and exquisite proportion; identity discernible in glory; the glorified not concealing likeness but imperfection. Decay and sin shall be left behind, and remembered faces shall come forth from behind the shadow of the grave into everlasting sunshine; and the old, weary, weeping earth shall put on her loveliest apparel, her bridal dress, and the footprints of death shall be abolished, and all tears shall be dried up; and the yearnings after union and reunion shall be satisfied; and

for the extinguished passions of hate, and envy, and jealousy, and all uncharitableness, shall be lighted on the altar of humanity, love, and joy, and peace, and happiness in believing; and tabernacles that shall never be taken down shall enclose a glory that shall never take flight, and all things shall be made new. Friendships annealed in suffering shall be perpetuated in heaven; the love that shed lustre on life's long vista shall be perfected and purified there. Martyrs for truth, who have borne its burden on their souls and its scar upon their hearts; who have toiled for the world's highest interests and died for the world's greatest good; who have swept life's humble way with their garments on their errands of beneficence; whose voices have fallen as consolatory music into the hearts of the widow and the orphan—these, with palms in their hands and crowns on their brows, with nothing on their faces remaining of the trials through which they have passed, except the glory of the victory they have gained, shall mingle with the white-robed group who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and faith shall be lost in sight, and hope shall be merged in having, and pain shall be absorbed in indescribable pleasure, and death shall be extinguished in everlasting life; and there shall be no more tears, nor sorrow, nor pain, nor death, for all former things have passed away, and the world as it is has been transfigured into the world as it will be.

O Lord, number us with these thy saints in glory everlasting, for Christ's sake!

## LECTURE III.

### ALL THINGS NEW.

THE old and weary and worn-out earth has in reserve a glorious regeneration, a magnificent palingenesia. What it shall be is so sure, that prophecy shapes itself in history.

“The former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.” — *Revelation xxi. 4, 5.*

I HAVE shown that, assuming this to be a fallen world, and its people to be the victims of sin, pain and death, instead of being intrinsically calamities, are turned into mercies. Whilst pain and death introduced by sin are abnormal in their real character, yet in a world overwhelmed by sin, and amidst a people full of imperfections, these exercise a beneficent as well as retributive power. Pain in the body, the fruit of sin, is a warning of danger and of the inroads of death. Death also has in it mercy. It ends the quarrels, the disputes, the controversies of the world. I showed that the possibility of a miser living for ever would be a calamity to mankind. The death therefore of the individual is often a blessing to society. What

a calamity would have been an immortal Napoleon Bonaparte, the scourge of Europe, the terror of the nations ! When too we know in this present fallen state what ills and aches, what diseases and disappointments, what broken hearts, what bruised spirits, the wear and tear and conflicts of the world create, we must see that the death which does not extinguish the soul, but frees it from its restraints, is overruled as far as a penal thing can be overruled to be a blessing to believers. Death to a Christian is not ceasing to be, it is only ceasing to be seen by us ; it is not ceasing to be conscious, it is only ceasing to be able to express and unfold that consciousness to men. As the lightning leaves the cloud, and is free — as the bright scimitar leaps from the scabbard and gleams in the sunshine — so the soul leaps from the disorganized or the clay-cold frame ; and absent from the body it is not unconscious, nor asleep ; it is present with the Lord. And what is presence with the Lord ? “ In thy presence is fulness of joy ; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.”

I proceed to sum up the contents of these beautiful words : “ The former things are passed away ; and I,” says the Saviour, “ make all things new.” *Former* things ; not *first* things, which were in Paradise, but subsequent things, or former things to that — that is, subsequent to that economy, are all passed away. What are some of these ? It means no more sorrow, nor death, nor tears, nor crying ; sin is swept away like a shadow from the dial of time ; all that follows in the train of sin — sickness, disease, death, have been dispersed for ever ; the tears of sorrow dried, broken hearts healed, bleeding spirits bound up ; beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heavi-



ness. Error of every shade shall be dissolved. There never has been truth in the world without shadow, nor a pure gospel preached without a corresponding counterfeit of error ; and the more vivid and vital the truth becomes, the darker often the shadow that Satan conjures up and gathers round it. But when the day predicted here dawns on earth, all error shall flee away like a mist before the wind, and we shall no more see through a glass darkly, but face to face. As a necessary consequence of this, all controversies, theological, social, moral, political, shall cease for ever. No one can look at the church of Christ in any one stage of its progress without noticing how complicated and painful are the controversies that vex it. Never has there been a year in the church's history in which there has not appeared some man with an odd crotchet, or some minister with a twist in his temperament, or a distortion in his intellect, or a disease in his heart, so that precious truths, the glory of centuries, have been denounced and denied, as if they were the novelties of the day, instead of being the inspiration and the wisdom of God.

One day all this will pass away ; instead of each looking at truth from his own stand-point all will look at truth from the throne of the Lamb. Then every truth will appear in its own beautiful and perfect proportion. We shall see the truth in its fulness and know even as we are known. There will be no more disputes, and quarrels, and coldness, and suspicions among those that are true Christians. It is sad that such men should suspect, and doubt one another, and speak unkindly, and unjustly, and ungenerously of one another. How much more happy would the church be, how much more impressed would the world feel, if every Christian would forbear to say an



unkind word about a brother when he cannot say a kind one, or would conceal a brother's defects as much as he can, instead of magnifying the defects and diminishing to the very utmost the excellences that accompany them ! How much more of the love of God would be felt and how much more of the peace of the church and of the world would be manifested if, whilst we could say nothing good about the worst, we should say as little evil as we possibly can ! What is charity ? It believeth all things, it hopeth all things. In those you think the worst, if you knew them as God knows them, you would see latent excellences of which you have no suspicion ; and in those that you think the very best, if you were to see them as God's omniscient eye sees them, you would detect shadows deep and dark in proportion to the excellences which are set in the midst of them. What says the apostle ? " Charity covereth a multitude of sins." What does that mean ? Does it mean charity in me atones for my sins ? Not at all ; it means charity in me casts its veil over the imperfections and sins of a brother ; that is to say, while I see a brother doing what I must condemn, thinking what I must oppose, speaking what I must rebuke, I will tell him to his face the truth sharply, and yet affectionately ; but I will not go behind his back and say bitter things and bad things about him. In the exercise of the charity of the apostle I will cover and conceal his sins and defects as much as I can from the rest of mankind. Now were such a feeling universal, what a happy world would ours be, what a happy Church would Christ's be ! Let us think well of these things ; and see if we might not love the poor weeping world more, and thus make it better, instead of rebuking the world so bitterly, and thus making it worse. And if as we must own this state of

things is not yet come, let us bless God that it will come, and let us pray for that happy period when former things that are faulty shall all have passed away.

Then says the Saviour in the second clause: "Behold, I make all things new." Christ is the Creator, the Preserver, and the Redeemer. He is also what we are apt to forget, the Restorer of all things. He is not only the Redeemer, having paid the price for all, but he is the Restorer, and will make good the purchase that he himself has paid. What things will be made new? Magnificent result! we shall have new bodies. A great deal of what we blame the best of Christians for may not be owing so much to their hearts being cold or their souls unconverted, as to what the apostle calls the burden of this body in which we groan and are in trouble. Many a depressed Christian should blame his nerves, not his soul. Many a person of exquisitely amiable spirit owes his amiability to a happy constitution in God's goodness, not to a regenerated heart by God's grace. And we should be very slow, therefore, to pronounce upon the worst, unable as we are to discriminate between feelings that have their origin in the heart and influences that may have their birth in a diseased body. If you touch one string of a harp a neighboring string will vibrate in response to it. Soul and body are like two harp-strings; the one acts and reacts on the other. It is a very humbling thing, I know nothing more humbling than this, that what one eats can affect one's spiritual peace, and comfort, and happiness. As long as we are in the body, the apostle tells us, we carry about with us a burden. He says he would not wish to be unclothed upon, that is, separate from the body, but clothed upon; but only clothed upon with that house, that new body from which all death, disease, and decay

will be expelled, which will not be a weight, but furnish wings to the soul ; which will not be an obstruction, but a ministry of responsive aid ; which will never mar the happiness of the inward spirit or darken the splendor of the inward shrine, but be the means of the development, and the expression, and the manifestation of all that grace has made us and of all that glory has introduced us into.

We shall be raised to a new dignity. What are we here ? Sons of God, but sons in disguise ; the blood royal, but the blood royal in a state of depression. "The world knoweth us not, as it knew him not." The world misconstrues us, as it misconstrued him. But a day comes when we shall be invested with a new, a noble, and a visible dignity ; when we shall be manifested, in the language of the apostle, as the sons of God ; when we shall see him as he is, and be like him, as we now are not ; when ours shall be a crown of righteousness, an inheritance incorruptible, a glory that does not fade, a happiness that does not wane with experience nor waste with years.

Among the new things we shall receive a new name. "I will write upon him," says the Saviour, "my new name." Names once were things ; they have now come to be signs, while the substance is often wanting. For instance, the title "lord" meant "a bread-giver ;" and the title "lady," "a bread-distributor ;" but every lord and lady are not always true to the origin of their title. So there are names retained by us which have no counterpart in our experience, current nevertheless, and marks by which we are distinguished. But a day approaches when names merely local, national, ecclesiastical, and so unreal, shall be dissolved, and the name that was heard first at Antioch, Christian, shall be last and alone in the millenium, and Christian and Christ shall be all and in all.

The name then shall be the thing, the sign shall be substance; we shall be what we seem and profess ourselves to be.

We shall sing a new song. How often do you read that expression: "Thou hast put a new song in my mouth!" and again we read in the Apocalypse: "And they sing a new song." What is meant by that new song? It is this — the highest music never palls; the masterpieces of painting you can look at over and over again, and never weary looking at them. God's great masterpieces in the garden, the flower, the blossom, one could look upon all the year. Man's creation is very different. If one looks at the most exquisite lace made in Brussels or Valenciennes, worth much, through a microscope it appears the most clumsy, coarse structure it is possible to imagine. But if you look at a bee's wing through a microscope, the highest microscopic power you can bring to bear upon it only reveals its greater beauty. So things that have the highest excellence never pall with years or disappoint on inspection. The new song that will be sung in heaven means that the themes will be so rich, the love that inspires it will be so glowing, the triumphs it commemorates will be so grand, the Saviour as its key-note will be so glorious, that the song sung thousands of years ago, though heard every day, will retain all the freshness with which it would be heard if it had never been sung before. Such is the new song, among the new things, that will be in heaven.

All this will take place in a new city, called the new Jerusalem that cometh down from heaven. A new city — the city, says the apostle, of the living God. The character of all cities now is not that of cities of the living God. Athens was the city of Pallas or Minerva, a dead goddess: Rome was the city of Mars, a dead god.

This new Jerusalem that cometh down from heaven, refulgent with heaven's glory, and settling like a splendid vision on the bosom of a renovated earth, is the city of the living God. Life in its streets, life in its streams, life in its trees, for its fruit is for food, and the leaves of its trees are for the healing of the nations; beautiful, the joy of the whole earth, and glorious as a bride descending from heaven adorned for the bridegroom.

We shall find at that day a new earth. Many people are so enamored of this earth that they do not wish anything better. Well, I admit that it has a great deal of remaining loveliness in it. There are scenes of exquisite beauty, landscapes of unrivalled loveliness; but then the frosts nip these flowers, the hurricane sweeps away this beauty; earthquakes gulp down great capitals; pestilence decimates the population, and still we find too true the apostle's judgment: "all creation groans and travails in pain, waiting and yearning to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God." But this earth will be made new; not another earth — we do not want that, any more than another body. We desire a new body disinfected of its evil, and a new earth purified of all the corruption that sin has superinduced. It has always appeared to me one of the most absurd and undesirable things on which some persons seem to dwell with fondness, that this earth, this round ball on which we now tread, shall be annihilated. Who would wish Olivet, Gethsemane, Calvary, Mount Tabor, Sinai and Mount Sion to be extinguished for ever? Who would wish such grand historic recollections, such holy Peniels, such centres of interest to perish from the world and cease to be? No, they will not cease to be. The Restorer will expel what sin has introduced, and recall all things to their Eden loveliness,



beauty, and perfection. We want to see sin removed out of it. Take sin from this earth, which is the fever that racks it, the poison that disturbs it, the unclean spirit that nestles in its heart, and that makes it a place of tombs — instantly every desert would rejoice and every wilderness would blossom as the rose. I confess if you could take away from this worlds in with all its progeny—disease, grey hairs, old age, iniquity, corruption, imperfection, death, woe — and all the progeny of the fall, I would not wish a better nook of the universe for heaven than this same beautiful, restored, and consecrated world. It is not to be annihilated, it is to be restored; it is not to be destroyed, it is to be purified. It will be the porch of heaven — this broken-off island will be reknit to the great continent of glory, and both shall be one. And I am sure when this sister orb of ours, that has long gone astray, that has long played the prodigal, the sinner, and the fool, shall be replaced in its ancient orbit and restored to the sisterhood of worlds, that other worlds which never fell will say as they never said before, Come, bring forth the ring, and the best shoes, and kill the fatted calf; it is right that we should rejoice, for this our dead sister is again alive, and family that was broken off is now a happy, and holy, and blessed family for ever and for ever.

There will also be a new heaven. Peter says, "We look for a new heaven and a new earth." What is meant by the word "heaven?" The scriptural use of it as a physical thing is the atmosphere, the air that surrounds us. Heaven as a moral condition is the condition of the soul separate from the body. Well, the new heaven and the new earth that Peter looks for, that Isaiah predicts, will be, first, the purification of the atmosphere we breathe. What is the secret source or vehicle of nine-tenths of the



diseases that infect the human frame? The atmosphere. And when that atmosphere is purified of all its taint, disinfected of all its impurity, and consecrated by God's word, how bright will the sun shine through a pure air! how sweet the breath of early morn and dewy eve! how resonant with the sounds and strains of psalmody and song! how glorious will be the whole panorama when no dark mist, no foul miasma, taint that air which was originally so pure, and only subsequently, through our sin, become so corrupt!

When all things are made new we shall have a new companionship. At present the holiest and best of men with whom we hold company reveal to us, the closer our intimacy, more of their imperfections and their weaknesses. How true it is that few characters can bear to be inspected minutely! And the longer that we live and come in contact with each other the more we feel there is for God to pardon in the best and for us to forgive in the very worst. But in that happy state when all things shall be made new we shall converse with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the world's grey fathers. I should like to have the opportunity of asking Adam what he felt when he fled from God on that day when he first felt sin, and what Eve thought when she heard the sound of her retreating steps from Eden, and saw the beautiful rose withering in her hand; and man went out into a world depopulated and dismantled, to water it with the tears of his weeping eyes, and to fertilise it with the sweat of his brow. We shall then see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Paul, and Peter, and John; and the Waldenses, who were faithful amid the faithful few; and Luther, and Ridley, and Latimer, and Knox, and Cranmer, and Chalmers, and Wesley, and Whitfield, and thousands

of whom the world was not worthy. What a brilliant society ! what a glorious converse ! what a delightful intercourse ! and in the midst of all Him who is the adoration of all, the trust of all, the key-note of all song, the Alpha and the Omega of all wisdom, the Lamb upon the throne, before whom they cast their crowns in flashing showers, and join in anthems that have no discord and in strains that have no weariness : “ Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, and riches, and glory, and power, and dominion for ever and for ever.”

We shall have in absolute perfection what we have now imperfectly — new hearts. Regeneration upon earth culminates in perfection in glory. At present the best of Christians sometimes feel worship and sermons to be a weariness. It may be sometimes want of interest in the discourse, but it is perhaps as often weakness and weariness in the hearer. Many a time while the preacher speaks the hearer’s thoughts are wandering after something else. One must feel very much for men of business, who, weary and exhausted by the toils of the week, come into the sanctuary on Sunday. How hard to keep their thoughts from wandering out of the place of worship ! They feel on Sunday all the weariness of exhausted nature. But we shall then have hearts so changed that worship never will be weariness, service will never become bondage, God will never be feared or fled from, but always loved. The cold polar atmosphere that is around our hearts shall be warmed with all the fervor of heaven. No unclean spirit shall touch the heart ; no evil thought that we deprecate or deplore shall find hospitality in it ; no disturbing power shall affect it, no vacillation shall ever influence it ; but with hearts warmed with the love, changed by the power, and purified by the presence of

the Prince of Peace, we shall love him as we never loved him before, and seeing him as he is we shall adore and worship him as we ought evermore.

We shall have there what we have in its incipient state upon earth, a new conscience. But conscience in its best estate upon earth is very imperfect indeed. We all know that the accusations of conscience outnumber its excuses. We all know what the feeling of regret is, what the more poignant and terrible feeling of remorse is. Such feelings shall cease to be; the conscience shall be the realm of perfect right; its instincts the echoing oracles that respond to the will and perfectly obey the behests of God himself. The whole conscience always and everywhere will be pure, perfect, holy. There shall be no regret, nor remorse, nor sighing, nor grief, nor sorrow. And there shall be when all things are made new also new intellects. When man fell every faculty that he had fell with him. Man's body has not now the physical perfection it had in Paradise, man's memory has been weakened, man's intellect has been shorn of its mighty power, man's conscience has become diseased, and his heart degenerate and infected with sin. Well, a day will come when the horizon that now limits the excursions of intellect will be vastly enlarged. At present the greatest intellect is the first to acknowledge that the more it sees the greater is the darkness beyond the horizon which bounds its vision. It was Sir Isaac Newton who said when congratulated upon his most brilliant discoveries. "I am but like a child gathering sea-shells and pebbles on the shore, whilst the great unsounded ocean I have never fathomed lies beyond." So the most gifted intellect in this world, the intellect of him who could unbraid the sunbeam, who could cast his measuring line around the

stars, who could weigh them in scales, who could estimate their distances and densities, and calculate their speed — that intellect is no more to be compared with what it will be in that higher, purer, happier, better state when all things are made new, than a child's mind is to be compared with his. Then we shall think what now we only dream of, and we shall speak what now we only think, and we shall do and dare what now we only talk ; and we shall see infinite resources of gratification, of joy, of happiness, of delight, in every flower, in every tree, in every star, in every pebble, in every text and promise and verse ; for our horizon will be enlarged ; all things will be made new. The contrast will be great between this clouded, damp, ungenial world, and that bright, that blessed, holy, and beautiful home, which eye has not even seen a glimpse of it, nor ear heard a just expression of its greatness, nor heart conceived the things that God has laid up for them that love him.

Have we received the new nature in this world which is the apprenticeship for those new things that will be enjoyed in that world that is to come ? Christianity begins in regeneration upon earth ; it culminates in the restoration of all things made new. Faith in this economy looks to an unseen Saviour ; love embraces him and holds him fast, and will not let him go ; hope takes his promises into its heart, and rides at its anchorage-ground amidst the storms of the world undisturbed. But at that day faith will be lost in actual sight ; hope will be merged in perfect having ; and then having loved him unseen we shall love him when we see him with our whole heart, and strength, and might. Grace in the individual heart ripens into glory in the age to come. Have we now new hearts ? Has God the Spirit changed our nature ? Are we made

new creatures? It has been ascertained by science that the density of the planets so varies, that if a person were taken from this earth and placed on the planet Jupiter, the greater density is such that his own weight would crush him into atoms; whereas there are other planets where the density is so much less than the density of our earth, that we should not be able to stand upon the ground, we should be lifted out of it and above it. That shows that the inhabitant must always be made fit for the place in which he is to dwell. It applies morally as well as physically. They that are the heirs of heaven must be made fit for it. Grace on earth makes us meet for glory beyond it. And the way to reach that grace is, Christ and him crucified. That is the door that opens into glory; that is the pathway, more glorious than Jacob's ladder, that rises from earth's deepest grave to heaven's highest throne. Are we trusting in that name? are we pleading that perfect sacrifice? are we found in him? Can we say, Blessed Saviour, I feel how many are my sins, my imperfections, my weaknesses, my wandering thoughts, my sins of omission and commission; but thou knowest that the little trust I have in thee, and it is little in comparison of what it should be — and the little love that I bear to thee, and it is cold in comparison of what it should be — I would not give up for the whole world; I would meet martyrdom boldly rather than renounce my trust and my hope in thee?



## LECTURE IV.

### THINGS IN REVERSION.

CHRISTIANS in this world may be homeless — bread may fail them and water not be sure — but in the world as it will be there is a glorious reversion. It is preparing for our entrance and enjoyment, far off in summers we shall surely see.

“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.” — *Isaiah lxiv. 4.*

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” — *1 Corinthians ii. 9.*

THOSE things which we are told the eye has not seen and the ear has not heard, the spirit of God has revealed to them, in the one passage, that wait on him; in the corresponding passage, that love him. If the Spirit, therefore, has revealed them, they must be in the Spirit's own record, namely, the inspired Scriptures, which are given to us for our learning. Let me therefore try to make you up an inventory, simply and plainly, from the Spirit's own record, of those great things and good things which are held in reversion, prepared, and laid up, for those that, in the one passage, “wait upon him;” for those that, in the



other, "love his name." What are some of those things? We read of a kingdom that is to come; a kingdom not yet arrived, else we should praise him for it; but a kingdom that is promised, and therefore we pray for it: "Thy kingdom come." The description of this kingdom, given by the Spirit of God is: "And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." If we be Christians, we are the blood royal in disguise; the world knoweth us not; if we be Christians, we are God's hidden kings, destined one day to be manifested, when he will address us in his own royal accents: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world."

The second thing revealed by the Spirit as prepared for God's people is a crown. "Henceforth," says Paul, "there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." We read again in another portion: "Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." We lost in Eden our crown of primal innocence; but we receive in Paradise regained a crown of greater glory and magnificence still. There is not a crown on crowned head that does not rust; there is not a temple that wears a crown that does not ache; there is not a crown on the most beloved and loving sovereign in which there are not thorns, and underneath which there are not cares; but there is laid up for God's people a crown that shall have no thorns, into which the rust shall never eat, beneath which there shall be no throbbing brow; the mark of di-

vinity, the symbol of a kingdom, the fulfilment of a promise: "I will give thee a crown of life." That is the second thing which is prepared for those that love him. There is also prepared, which eye has not seen, which ear has not heard, which heart has not conceived, for them that love him an inheritance. What is the future joy? Not a prize we earn, nor a property we buy, but an inheritance to which we are entitled. A nobleman's son inherits his title, and his dignity, and his estates, not because he is a good son, or an affectionate son, or a clever son, but simply and nakedly because he is a son; it is not his merit, but his relationship. We shall be admitted into everlasting joy not because we are good men, nor because we are deserving men, but because we are by grace forgiven men, and by the Spirit of God translated into the adoption of God's dear children, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. Here our chief freehold upon earth is a grave; here our heirloom and inheritance is sorrow; there no grave is dug for the dead, no farewells are uttered to the dying; it is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away; in which we can say, all things are ours; Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are ours, and our inheritance; for we are Christ's and Christ is God's.

The next thing worthy of mention prepared for them that love God is what the Apostle tells us: "there remaineth a rest for the people of God." There is no rest here; no one ever yet sat down upon the sunniest spot in which and over which he could long say — Now let me remain here for ever. There is no man on earth, however prosperous he may be, who could say or would venture to say at this moment — Now let the wheel stand still; I

wish to remain what I am, nothing less, nothing more, for ever. You will find that as soon as you get to one sunny spot you covet another ; and when you get to that other, you look higher, and covet another ; and every heart's innermost experience tells its possessor, here we have no continuing city ; this is not our rest ; but blessed be God, there remaineth a rest for the people of God. There is a home in which shall never be heard the voice of disturbance or of discord ; a sweet and beautiful haven into which this world's troubled waters shall not roll ; a spot where the heart shall find its true anchorage, and the affections cease their oscillations ; and we shall say, what no human being, the most favored upon earth, can say — I am satisfied. We shall behold his face in righteousness, and we shall be satisfied.

The next thing that God has prepared for them that love him is what he calls a better country. Perhaps our own land, with all its faults, is the best in the world. Italy may have sunnier skies and a richer soil ; France may have more brilliant people and a brighter air ; but in neither country is there what an Englishman has, and what is peculiarly and almost exclusively English — home. In that better rest, that better country that is beyond the grave, there is a home. No pestilence shall flap its wings over it ; the inhabitants shall not say, “ I am sick ; ” no tears will be shed over the dying, no lamentations will be uttered for the dead ; a country in which there is no cloud, nor storm, nor earthquake, nor hurricane, nor plague, nor pestilence, nor famine ; a better country, to which Abraham looked, and in which all Abraham's children shall meet, as the true native land of humanity, the true country for which human hearts yearn. There is prepared for us, according to God's own promise, a city,

a city that hath foundations, a heavenly city, the heavenly Jerusalem. All the host of all the children of God, from the days of Abraham onward to the days of Paul, looked for what they called a city, the city of the living God. And it is remarkably confirmatory of the literality of the fulfilment of their hope, that the brightest picture contained in the Apocalypse is the picture of a city: "And he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." And after giving the foundations of the city, and robbing earth of its riches in order to add splendor to the picture, he says: "I saw no temple therein;" why? Because it was all temple; "for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it;" why? Because those dim lights shall be superseded by an intenser brightness; "for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there" — night, the time of misapprehension, of coldness, of darkness, of error, of gloom, of mistake — "there shall be no night there. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Now there is nothing absurd in supposing when this earth is restored as a material orb, and is reconsecrated by the touch of its descending Lord — when all things shall be made new, and the Creator of it of old shall come

into it again, the Redeemer of it — that this picture is not a poet's vision, but the literal and actual realization of a Christian's hope and expectancy. If we are to be raised in flesh and blood, as we shall be ; if we are to remain what we are, men, not angels, who are spirits only ; not dumb creatures, which are animals only, but the links of everlasting connection between the world of spirits and the world of matter ; that magnificent descent from heaven must settle on the bosom of a reconsecrated globe ; and there shall be the chancel of the universe, there the high altar, the Son of God ; there the glory shining that dwelt of old between the cherubim ; there daily service ; on its consecrated floor kneeling a mighty multitude, that no man can number ; and ascending from its courts, and from its palaces, and from its floor, a hurricane of praise and thanksgiving : " Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, and riches, and power, and glory." He promised us a city ; we are come to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, and an innumerable company of angels.

There is prepared for us a house. What is meant by this ? The most exquisite picture in the whole New Testament of the heavenly state is that in the 14th chapter of John : " In my Father's house are many mansions." One of the first astronomers of the age was asked the question, What is the grandest and truest picture of the starry sky ? The answer was, The 2nd verse of the 14th chapter of St. John's Gospel : " In my Father's house are many mansions." The contrast presented when our Saviour uttered these words was most striking. In that temple built upon the brow of Zion there are many tents, and these will soon all be struck ; but in my Father's house, the house that hath foundations, the house not



made with hands, there are many, not tents, but mansions — abiding dwelling-places. And the picture of it is still more enhanced when he adds, it is, “my Father’s house.” Under its roof-tree will meet all the brothers and sisters of the vast redeemed family of humankind ; around our Father’s fireside we shall one day gather ; and if ever there was a happy Christmas roof-tree upon earth, it will be as nothing in comparison of the happiness of the bright group that meets beneath the roof of our Father’s house, and gathers around that home that shall never be taken down. “Our Father, which art in heaven ;” “Father,” the fatherhood of God ; “*our* Father,” the brotherhood of all the family of Christians ; “our Father in heaven,” the common home to which we shall all one day be gathered. Conceive a home emancipated from its cares ; a home denuded of its worst and its bitterest anxieties ; a home into which sickness shall never penetrate ; from which the dead shall never be carried out to the house appointed for all living — conceive a home where no cares cluster about the roof, where no shadows dim the brightness of the fire-side ; where there are no quarrels, nor losses, nor griefs, nor fears, nor anxieties ; and multiply and magnify it ten thousand times ten thousand, and you will have some dim conception of that house which our Father has prepared for them that are his children, and that love him.

He has prepared for us a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And who would be sorry if this old earth were renewed and these old heavens were made new ? Some people seem to shrink from the idea and the expectancy of it. They remind one of the prodigal ; he got so satisfied with the husks that the swine did eat that he began to forget that he was made to eat bread in his father’s house. Now many persons are so



pleased with this present world, and so absorbed in it, and so taken up with it, that if you tell them about looking for its restoration — as our Lord calls it — its regeneration, they will laugh at you as a fanatic or as a fool, or a man that does not know the world, and does not understand the value of the world. If this world were our all, atheism would be the instinctive refuge of humanity. No man can persuade me that this world is as a good and a gracious God made it: or that it is so good that it needs neither repair, nor regeneration, nor restoration. It was once the loveliest orb amid the stars of the sky or amid the creations of the universe — mysteriously, why or wherefore I cannot explain, sin was permitted to enter; and sin, like a blot of ink upon the sensitive blotting-sheet, the instant it touched it saturated the whole mass with its deadly poison, and it broke forth into fever, convulsion, paralysis, disease, barrenness, blight, pestilence, plague, famine, and death. Who would be sorry, if we were one day to tread this orb, and to worship and to walk on it, and to breathe its air, sin eliminated from it? The instant that sin is eliminated from this orb, its bleakest deserts will rejoice, and its most barren spots will blossom like the rose. If you could only bind the enemy, as he will be bound, for a thousand years, and cast out of this world — if you could remove sin with its fever, extract its poison, eliminate its pollution — the other stars of the universe, when they see this earth restored, and a happy people on its bosom, will gather round it, and will say, Who could have believed such a change? Why, this our poor lost sister is now found; this our poor dead sister is now made alive; come, let us rejoice, and praise him who created it by his power and redeemed it by his love; and has made this once barren, polluted, wretched, sinful earth

to be the bright jewel on which he has engraven, in letters legible to the universe, the name that is above every name, and from which shall be reflected for ever and ever rays of glory, and honor, and worship to Him who loved it, and washed it in his blood, and hath made it the first and the fairest of all creations.

He has also prepared for us, for each of us, a new earth; not another earth; for it is not true that this earth is to be annihilated; this would be giving the devil his greatest glorification. Not one thing that Satan secured in Paradise will be handed over to him, except those that would not be saved. Sin, and sorrow, and suffering, and grief, and wickedness, and hate and corruption, and plague, shall all be presented to Satan, and he shall have the glory of them all. Whereas honor, and praise, and worship, and greatness, and majesty, and the kingdom, shall all be presented to Christ, and he shall have the glory of it all. There will not be one acre of this globe of which Satan shall be able to say, I made it thus, and I have got the victory; but from every inch, and acre, and spot of it shall ascend praise to Jesus, once its Creator, now its Redeemer, its Land Lord, and its Sea Lord, and its Proprietor for ever and ever.

As he has prepared for us a new heaven and a new earth, so he is preparing for each of us a new body suitable to the new earth on which we are to walk, the new air we are to breathe, and the new skies on which we are to look. These bodies of ours once were just as perfect as the earth itself was; but the instant sin entered, that instant the first hair began to turn grey, the first wrinkle gathered on the brow, the first wavering seized the nerves, the first fever chilled the heart, the first remorse took possession of the conscience; and man died,

because man had sinned. But when this new heaven and new earth shall be, "this mortal," this very mortal, the apostle says, "shall put on immortality, this corruptible shall put on incorruptibility; it is sown in corruption"—but the same *it*, mark you—"it is raised in incorruption; it is sown a material body, it is raised a spiritual body;" not a spirit, but a spiritual body. The resurrection is not the creation of a body suitable to us taken from the mass of humankind, and shaped anew by the plastic and transforming touch of our Redeemer; but that very same body that you laid in the wardrobe of nations, which we call the grave; the soul shall come from heaven when Christ comes, and shall stand on that very spot on which you laid down that mortal and put on that same body immortal; no longer the clinging, cold garment of decay, but the beauteous, resplendent robe of immortality—a meet shrine for the great priest who is to live in it as in a glorious chancel, and to worship and serve him for ever. Everything like imperfection, everything like sin, shall be eliminated from the body; but its identity is an essential element in the hope of the resurrection. That footfall that is hushed on your threshold in this world you will hear in sweet music again; that countenance that came to your fireside like sunshine shall be relighted with more than its brightest summer, never to be clouded for ever; those circles that are broken shall be completed; those that have passed into the shadow of the grave shall be brought out of it; and I shall know you, and you shall know me; and each feature, deprived of its imperfection, shall be developed in sharper and more beautiful relief, but identically the same that you recognized as your own familiar friend. A very sweet poet thus sings of that recognition:—

“ Shall I go wandering on through empty space,  
As on earth, lonely ;  
Or seek through myriad ranks one face,  
And miss that only ?  
Rather I pray Him who Himself is love,  
Out of whose essence  
We all do spring, and toward Him tending move  
Back to his presence,  
That even his brightness may not quite efface  
The soul's earth features —  
That the dear human likeness each may trace  
In glorified creatures.”

The last I may mention, not the least important of all, but on which I will not dwell, is that we shall see him as he is. We now see him through a glass darkly. Were Christ to manifest his glory to us now, like Saul we should be struck down by the excessive splendor; but one day, when we shall be like him, we are told we shall see him as he is. And if the masterpieces of painting be beautiful, if the gems of poetry be exquisite, what shall be our delight when we shall see him crowned with many crowns, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto our God ! while at his feet ten thousand times ten thousand, an innumerable company of priests and kings, that no man can number, will cast their bright crowns in flashing showers, and shall say : “ Unto him that hath loved us, and made us these kings, and consecrated us these priests, and hath given us this house not made with hands, this better country, this rest that remaineth for the people of God, this inheritance, this kingdom, this crown of glory ; unto him be glory, and honor, and praise now and evermore. Amen.” Be assured, that all things are hastening to the accomplishment of this blessed hope, this glorious expectancy. If you are now among the people of God, every step that

you take is a step upward and onward ; everything that befalls you is helping you there. Do you know your full privilege, that all things, grief and gladness, tears and smiles, sunshine and shadow — the disappointment that frets, the reproach that clouds, the loss that pains — all things, under a mysterious touch, are working together, co-operating for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose ? There is not an atom of wrath in the heaviest billow that breaks upon your heart ; there is not a drop of condemnation in the bitterest cup that is placed to your lips ; there is not a breath of penal evil in the severest hurricane that strikes you ; there is no condemnation to you. God has infused into the universe itself friendship for and co-operation with that man who is the friend of Christ, a son of God, an heir of heaven. If all these things be prepared for you, is it not a great thing to think of them ? People sometimes say, why preach what is future, and merge (which I do not) the obligations and the duties that are instant in the present ? I answer, when I wish to get my faith strengthened, I look back ; when I want to see my duties clear, I look up ; when I want to get a little sweet sunshine into this dreary, gloomy, wintry world, I draw upon that magnificent future to which all past ages have yielded their tribute, and in whose grandeur all past ages will be glorified and crowned. I am a Christian ; there are three graces that I need in my heart : faith that leans, love that obeys, hope that looks forward ; and as it is needful that I should have the hope that draws upon the future sunbeams for the present, as that I should have the faith that trusts in the cross ; and trusting in that justifies me through faith that is in Jesus Christ. If these things be laid up for us, let me remind you, how instant should be



our efforts to lead all into an acquaintance with these things, and the way to them, and the knowledge of the truth ! Now is the accepted time ; now is the convenient season ; to-day is the day of salvation. Let us be saints in order to be stewards ; let us be Christians in order to be servants ; let us seek grace for ourselves, not simply to augment the capital of our own happiness, but in order to diffuse and spread that grace among those that are ignorant of the blessings that Christ has laid up for them that love him.

And finally, recollect that these future things are the elements prepared for a people prepared for them. It has been often said, and I have often repeated it, heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Every stone is quickened and fitted for its place ; every star is kindled, and placed in its orbit ; every creature on earth, the fish in the sea, the bird in the air, the beast upon the earth, is fitted for the sphere in which it is to live, and move, and fulfil its destined functions — so men must be made Christians, old hearts must be made new hearts, old natures must be made new natures, that we may be fitted and prepared for those grand things and good things which Christ has laid up for them that love him. Can you say, O Lord Jesus, I love thee ? Can you say from the very heart, I know, Prince of Peace, thine agony and bloody sweat for me ; I know, gracious Saviour, thy tears, thy sorrow, thy suffering ; thou knowest all things, blessed Lord ; thou knowest that I do not love thee as I ought, and do not love thee as I would ; yet that little love that I have for thee is so dear to me that I have only one regret that it is not intenser ; but little as it is, I would not part with it for all the gems, and pearls, and treasures of the world that now is ; and I can only hope that when I shall see thee, who hast loved me as thou hast, I shall then love thee as I now desire, and as I ought ?



## LECTURE V.

### PATCHES OF SUNSHINE.

A HAPPY purpose is power. When it rests on strong foundations it writes itself legible in sunshine.

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord ; my soul shall be joyful in my God ; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.— *Isaiah lxi.* 10.

It seems to be the purpose and hope of the child of God in its universal, if of the Israelite in its primary application, to rejoice in God, and to joy in the God of his salvation. A vow to be happy is a vow worth making ; the only question it becomes us to solve, and in which we feel the deepest possible interest, is, Is it possible to be happy ? and secondly, if it be possible to be happy now or hereafter, is it our duty to be so ? I am sure all must be struck in reading the Word of God with exhortations to rejoice : “ They shall rejoice all the day long.” “ Rejoice in the Lord ; and again I say,” the apostle repeats, “ rejoice.” “ The kingdom of heaven,” we are told, “ is righteousness ;” that is one third ; “ peace,” that is another third ; “ joy,” that is the last third, and the complement of the whole. It is quite plain, then, that if we

do not rejoice, if we are not happy, there is something wrong in us, or there is some misapprehension on our part. It is not because there is not a spring from which we may drink copious draughts, nor because there is not a God in whom we may rejoice and our souls be joyful. But some one will ask, do you by this remark mean to say that people can be insensible to the ills, and calamities, and troubles that flesh and blood are heir to? I do not believe that you can be insensible to griefs, and sorrows, and aches, and ills, that brood like birds of night, and flap their wings over earth's sunniest spots, and that continually. God does not bid us be Stoics; he has made our nerves of flesh and blood, not iron wires; he has made us sensitive to a pin point; and it is not inferred, nor justly inferred, nor is it taught in the Gospel, that we are not to be sensible to all that we see around us, or to all that we feel within us. The Psalmist, for instance, was an eminent Christian, yet he says: "Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." Jeremiah, who was a Christian, and a rejoicing Christian, though his name by very thoughtless people is used to denote all that is melancholy, said: "Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." So we read that Nehemiah's countenance was sad at the desolation of the place of his father's sepulchre. And that we must feel, and that it is not sinful to feel, we have a precedent in that short but sublimely expressive text, the evidence of grief expressed as well as felt, "Jesus wept." That text has sanctified the tears of weeping eyes and bound up the hearts that have been broken. But if we are to be sensible to these sorrows or to these ills, what is meant then by rejoicing? I answer, that our grief is be-

cause of the sin that we feel, the sorrows that we see, the troubles that are ploughed into that world in which we have a local habitation and a name. We cannot help being sad. But then, compensatory in the midst of this, neutralizing and overflowing this, there is a stream from that river which makes glad the city of our God. We rejoice in what God is; we rejoice in what God has done for us; we rejoice in what God has promised; and the grounds of joy so completely outnumber and so thoroughly outweigh all the springs and elements of grief, that the Christian says, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God."

Let me try to show why you should be glad. We are all willing enough to be glad, and we are all sorry enough that we cannot be so happy as we would be; and there is no doubt there are a great many things in this gloomy world of ours to make us sad; no one can doubt it; but then I maintain there are a great many more things elsewhere to make us joyful. But if you persist in picking up every sere and withered leaf that has fallen from the tree, and pass by every green one and every bright blossom that God puts in your way, you do wrong. There is something in human nature very odd in this matter, that it will try to gather elements of sadness, grounds of lugubrious lamentation, and refuse those springs of joy, those elements of gladness, that God has strewn everywhere over the area of creation — Providence and the Bible. Let me try to show you that there are some reasons why we should rejoice in God, and joy in the God of our salvation. Take creation. I do not mean to say that the earth is now as it was. I think that man must be very stupid or very unenlightened who believes that the earth is now, at this moment, as God made it. It is no such

thing ; it is all blotted, and marred, and broken up. One day it will be restored, but that day is not yet come. But take it as it is ; we sinned, we forfeited all ; and if God had made this earth a desert, swept by a ceaseless north-east wind, and laid it under a sheet of snow, and left us on that earth to make the best of our weary, cold, miserable pilgrimage through it, he would have even then not have let fall upon us all the curse that we had provoked. But let us look at this earth of ours, on which we have forfeited all, and where we have no right to anything. What remains of pristine beauty are there still ! how many sweet, sunny spots are in this orb of ours ! how many landscapes of surpassing loveliness ! A sight of the flowers thrown forth by the earth in June is almost like a glimpse of Paradise. Those beautiful scenes of rock, and hill, and valley, and alp, and glen, have lingering on them, as if reluctant to depart, the unspent rays of Paradise, earnest in their way that Paradise will again return. A poet has said —

“ A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.”

And he that looks upon all the things of beauty that are around us, if he will only open his eyes and let his heart out of the prison in which he keeps and cribs it, will see in this world of ours, with all its defects, a great many lovely, joyous, and joy-creating things. That is one reason why we should rejoice even now. My Father “ made them all ; ” and to rejoice in this is to act as a Christian. I remember saying one day in a lecture, that wherever I see a bit of heather it is to my mind suggestive of joyful and happy emotions. A secular and irritable writer was exceedingly shocked at it, that I should derive any joy from a heather blossom. I am not ashamed to say I de-

rive joy from the first cowslip in spring, from the first crocus in March, from the first snowdrop in January, from the first violet in February — these things are to me full of beauty and creative of joy. And why should not I rejoice in what God has made, and in what remains of Paradise? And why should I look with a sepulchral face and a gloomy heart upon things so bright and beautiful as these? “A thing of beauty is still a joy forever.”

I think we ought to rejoice in God because we see and feel so many blessings running through all God's providential government, and out of evil we discover him so often educing good. We look upon things that happen to us absolutely. If you do so, you will say with the patriarch of old, “All these things are against me.” So they feel and so you must conclude when you look at them absolutely, in themselves. But if you look at the worst things that betide you, assuming you are Christians, your bitterest griefs, your sorest bereavements, your heaviest tribulations, in the sunshine of the countenance of God, you discover — “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory.” “All things work together for good to them that love God, unto them that are the called according to his purpose.” That puts a new face upon this world of ours; for I am persuaded that this is God's everlasting truth, that all things work together for good to them that love God. Do I love God? If I am conscious that I do, let the winds beat, and the rains descend, and the storm strike; let our best beloved be consigned to an early grave; let our riches take wings and flee away; let the reproach of them that reproached Christ descend upon us — what is that? Nothing, nothing at all; all these things are working together for good



unto them that love God, unto them that are called according to his purpose. God's hand is in the thick of all this world's troubles. There is not a lie in the universe that shall not be cancelled; there is not a truth in the universe that shall not live.

The lines of a rectifying providence, often faint, but never effaced, shall become sharper and clearer when we discover at the close of this economy that instead of all things working against us, all things were working for good to us. In the wildest sweep of events, in the complexities of time, in the complications of Europe, in Italy, in Syria, in Austria, over all the earth, everything is perfectly arranged in God's own eternal calm, where he sits enthroned above the floods, making all contribute to his glory, and out of all educating liberty to the captive, the opening of the prison doors to the confined, and hastening on the acceptable year of God, and the day of vengeance of our God. Here is a reason for rejoicing in that the very things that human nature deplores and must feel are the very things that God has consecrated to be ambassadors from himself, to be benefactors to his people, and to give glory to his great name.

I will give another reason for rejoicing, and that is, redeeming love. We should rejoice in God, we should joy in our God, because of redeeming love. That is the inexhaustible fountain which overflows in streams that make glad the hearts of Christians, and will one day make glad the city of our God. After all, all the joys of prosperity, of riches, of rank, of dignity, are but the rain-drops from the eaves and tiles of the houses, that fall into the outer cisterns of the soul—a momentary refreshment—but the joys of the everlasting Gospel are from deep-sunk wells in the very depths of the human heart, springs



within us that mount up into everlasting life. The joys of the world are very much like the streams in summer — they are all dried up by the heat and by the absence of rain; but the joys of the Gospel are like those streams I have witnessed amid the Alps, and under the shadow of the everlasting snow. The Arve and rivers from the Alps are all fullest when the other streams are empty, and their beds or channels are dry; because the melted snow, which only melts in summer, makes them full when the sources that supply other streams are exhausted and dried up. So it is with this blessed Gospel of ours; it has springs in it for winter, it has streams for life's saddest and most sorrowful hours, when the joys of this world pall by possession.

It is too true that all this world's joys are vastly less in possession than they were in anticipation. It is most true that when we get the things we thought would be luxuries as we looked at them from a distance, it turns out now they are necessities, and we cannot do without them; and they have ceased to be luxuries and have become merely ordinary necessities. This world's joys are poor and mean, even at the best, and they that have most of them often have hearts that yearn, and hunger, and thirst for something better. We feel, all of us feel, that we often spend our money upon that which is not bread, and our labor for that which satisfieth not; but if any man will believe in Christ, he will have in him a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life. Thus the Christian has joys that the world has not; he has joy in God, he has joy in his providence, joy in his redemption, joy in his Gospel.

There is joy in loving him. Do we ever think that hate is misery? It is a very remarkable thing that the

indulgence (and it is one of those strong, latent, ineradicable proofs of the great truths of the Bible) of the bad passions is misery. You have felt sometimes hatred to a person; you could wish to injure that person from a spirit of revenge; or you envy some person. The very exercise of that feeling is misery to you. Let a man hate enough, and revenge enough, and have vengeance enough, and he will be a devil in this world; so true is it that the indulgence of the vile passions is essentially misery and unhappiness to him that indulges in them; while on the other hand the exercise of the beneficent passions is intrinsically happiness. What is love? Love God; love your brother; love your children; love your wife; love your husband; love all; love everybody; and what is the effect? That you are the happiest being alive. It is a beautiful and a blessed law that love is happiness; that the indulgence of those feelings that God inculcates, and that the Gospel requires, and that the Spirit reconsecrates, is essential and increasing joy.

Let me speak a word to some Christian who is very miserable: if you want to be happy, try to love somebody; go to some poor, miserable widow, who has no fire in her grate, and only rags upon her body, and little if any bread upon her table; take an interest in that poor woman, give her a loaf of bread, and clothe her with change of raiment, and you will positively feel in that miserable hovel into which you have entered, and in which you have done these good things, more than compensatory joy — you have kindled in her cold grate a warmth that has risen and entered your once sad heart. I need not quote such instances; I refer to Scripture itself: “It is,” says the Saviour, “more blessed” — that is, more happy — “it is more happy to give than to receive.” When-

ever you want to be made happy begin to give ; whenever you want to increase your own happiness to its highest temperature, and to raise it almost to the temperature of heaven, begin to love. You do not know what the fulness of Christianity is unless you find it as much pleasure to give a shilling to a good object as to earn one. Wherever you see sacrifice you see joy. What parts of the earth are most beautiful? Not the Sahara desert, producing nothing ; it seems the very picture of wretchedness and woe—it is the representative of a miser's heart—but the fields that wave with the golden crops of autumn ; the earth that throws up spontaneously her flowers ; the rivers that chime even where no ear hears them ; and the beauty and the sunshine that spread over the earth where there are no eyes to see them—these spots are the happiest ; they seem to rejoice because they are the most fertile of what gives pleasure and furnishes food for men and green grass for the service of cattle.

Perhaps heaven itself will consist in loving ; certainly the intensest exercise of love, that is, going out of self, will be the intensest realization of heaven. The words in our language that signify the highest happiness all mean going out of that narrow self in which we are cribbed and confined, and which we often make the standpoint from which we look at everything, and going into a larger, broader, deeper element. What is *transport*? To be carried beyond myself. What is *ecstasy*? To stand out of self ; meaning that the highest happiness is when we go out of self and take an interest in others. If, therefore, there be any Christians very depressed, unhappy, and cast down on Sunday, on Monday morning put on your hat and visit schools, day schools, ragged schools, the evening classes, the classes for the poor, the

ministries to the naked and the necessitous, and do something for them, and you will be very happy. And if there be any young men who are very hard-worked and who are not very happy, let me ask them to take a part in teaching Sunday schools, and depend upon it they will feel happier. Happiness is to be gathered like the dew of an early summer morning ; but people, instead of taking the dews from God's own heavenly fields, are prone to go to those impure, broken cisterns in which the rain has stood and becomes stagnant and unfit for use.

We owe it to God to be happy. The lower creatures all seem to recognize God. What is the first song of the thrush, the first musical whistle of the blackbird ? It is that creature's happiness overflowing in song to Him that made it. What are the violets of spring but earth praising God ? Did you ever read Coleridge's sublime hymn, written in the valley of Chamounix, on the side of the Alps, where he represents all nature lifting up a ceaseless anthem peal to God ? If creation even, fallen as it is, praises God, why should we Christians be the only discord ? why should we put on crape and ashes when creation tries to put on her bridal robes ? Why should we be the only disturbing elements in universal harmony ? Have we no reason to rejoice ? Are blackbirds happier than Christians ? are flowers more beautiful than the robes of righteousness, that are washed and made white ? What are we ? Forgiven through precious blood, clothed in righteous robes, adopted into the family of God, made heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ Jesus. Is not that enough to make us sing with joy unspeakable and full of glory ?

But we not only owe it to God to be happy, but to others also. There is a vast deal of influence radiating

from every human being, which I may call unconscious influence. I have seen a company of happy people met together, every one happy ; a stranger has been added to the group ; I have noticed instantly there has been a shadow over the whole. The fact is indisputable that a man coming into a bright circle with a gloomy face makes others gloomy ; a man giving voice to lugubrious lamentations makes others lugubrious like himself. There is a contagious influence in emotion which every one is conscious of. I have seen some men, thoroughly good men, children of God and heirs of heaven, who have an unhappy knack of always looking very sad — not solemn, but gloomy ; and the consequence is, every group they come into, every circle they mix with, catches the contagion of this gloom, and it becomes gloomy too. A cheerful countenance is a cheap way of diffusing happiness. I have seen other Christians whose faces were all sunshine ; so sunny that it seemed as if the very doors would open when they approached, and make them welcome, and the very groups of children would rejoice as they mingled with them. An unhappy, gloomy face does not really seem a Christian one ; and he who has always a good and a joyous word, and a happy thought, and a bright look, especially for children, is a man who at a very little expense is acting as a precious missionary in diffusing gladness. Put into a ragged school a person of a gloomy and depressed temperament ; as sure as that man comes there the ragged school will go down, and down, and the children will run away for shelter from the impression of his sad looks. But put in that ragged school a man with a sunny face, and a bounding heart, and a joyous spirit, and always taking hold of things by the bright side, and you will find that the children will gather round him, and feel



a festival in his very presence. It is human nature. And we owe it, therefore, to others to be as joyous as we can. But we owe it especially to religion itself to rejoice. It is not fair to identify religion with gloom; it is not just to make the grave the type of the visible church; it is not scriptural to represent religion as cloistral, monastic, and sepulchral. The definition of it is, two thirds emotion, one third character. Righteousness, that is character; peace, the calm feeling diffused over the heart; and joy, the electric feeling of him that rejoices in God, and joys in the God of his salvation. If you can only pervade the world with the impression that your religion has not only made you a just and a merciful, but a happy and a joyous man, you have given a large and liberal contribution toward the spread and the circulation of the Gospel. And why should you not rejoice? The ancient prophet even in the very worst of circumstances could rejoice. What did Habakkuk say? "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls" — suppose there should come this very year, to sum it up in one word, a season of dear bread and of heavy income tax — let all that come together, and fall upon us together, and we must feel that, and so far be grieved that it is so; but a Christian, in spite of all, emerging into a brighter summer, and sunshine and happiness, can say: "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Such is that joy; casting all your care upon Him who careth for you.

But I must in few words call attention to the last part. The prophet Isaiah here, representing the Jewish people



ransomed and restored primarily, but representing God's people always — for it is the same Christ that is the light of the one who is the glory of the other — says the ground why he should rejoice is: "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation." We lost the beautiful robes of innocence in Eden the moment that Eve put forth her hand, and ate of that forbidden tree, and brought sin and sorrow into the world; she then felt that her richest beauty faded, and her lovely robes shrivelled and fell off; and she felt morally and spiritually, rather than physically, that she was naked before God. God covered them with skins. That suggests the first idea or evidence of sacrifice. Animal food was not eaten till after the flood; it was not lawful to eat flesh till then; it is quite plain, therefore, that when the fall took place animals were not eaten for food. No doubt the instant there was sin, and as soon as the Gospel was preached — "The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head" — the symbol of sacrifice was introduced; and as in the case of Abel, the firstling of the flock was slain, and the skin of the animal offered in sacrifice was wrapped round Adam and Eve. Christ our sacrifice is slain; that spotless Lamb has been offered for us; and his spotless fleece, his glorious righteousness, is bestowed upon us. We are clothed, then, first of all, he says, with the garments of salvation; the symbols of it, the seals of it, and the titles to it — salvation from sin, from its curse, from its power, from its presence. Oh, the joyful sound, 'tis music to our ears! From that broken sepulchre in the garden of Arimathea rays of salvation have leapt forth that have made the hearts of increasing millions sing for joy. From that cross on which the Man of sorrows hung have descended streams that make glad the city of our God; and these garments of

salvation no moth can eat, no time can wear, no thief can steal. But not only does he say they are garments of salvation, but in order to complete the idea, and give it you in all its fulness, he says : “ He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” The garments of salvation are deliverance from sin ; the robe of righteousness is a title to happiness. We lost two things in Paradise ; we lost our title to heaven, and we incurred a title only to hell. Now in Christ Jesus we are delivered from hell, in garments of salvation ; we are entitled to heaven, in robes of perfect righteousness. In other words, this righteousness is unto all that will, and upon all that believe. “ He has made him who knew no sin to be made sin for us that we,” who have done nothing but sin, “ might be made the righteousness of God by him ; ” by his righteousness being imputed unto us. It is a robe, a garment, that we do not weave, that we cannot buy, that nobody can sell, that we need not wash ; it is the raiment white and clean, washed in the blood of the Lamb, which is the righteousness of saints ; it is a free gift ; it comes to us perfect and complete ; it needs no addition, and to attempt to add to it would be to destroy and to defile it. Faith is not something added to our salvation ; it is merely the acceptance of that salvation which God has provided.

When you are thus saved from hell, and are thus justified and entitled to heaven, the prophet describes in exquisitely beautiful words what else you receive ; he says : “ The robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” How beautiful is that ! the Saviour is the Bridegroom, his ransomed and redeemed church is the bride. In Revelation we read — and I believe this relates to that epoch — “ Let us be glad and rejoice, and

give honor to him ; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white ; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

These are full of suggestive thoughts ; the Saviour selecting us to be his bride, not because of something beautiful on us, nor something attractive in us, but in his own sovereign and unutterable love. When a man selects a woman to be his wife, he does so because there is something beautiful, or attractive, or fascinating to him in her ; but when Christ selected the Church to be his bride, he selected her not because she was beautiful, but to make her beautiful ; not because she was holy, but to make her holy ; not because she was lovely, but to make her lovely. He says himself, describing this very thing : "When I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, it was the time of love ; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness ; yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water ; and I annointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badger's skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments ; and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver ; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work ; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil ; and thou wast exceedingly beautiful,

and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty ; for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God."

And the same beautiful image, so full of thought, occurs in the Epistle to the Ephesians, where Christ says : "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it ; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word ; that he might present it to himself a glorious church : " now this is the marriage supper of the Lamb, this is the bridal festival in glory ; " that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish." He adds : "As a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments." This is extremely suggestive. In the original language, in the Hebrew, it is literally : "As a bridegroom decketh himself with a mitre like a priest." What a fine thought, that our priest is not merged in the bridegroom ; that Christ, in every relationship in heaven, as Prophet, King, Bridegroom, Husband, retains still running through all the priestly office ! Hence John says when he looked into heaven : "I saw a Lamb just as if he had been slain ;" he saw also the great High Priest, having the golden censer in his hand. So that even in his relationships as King, as Prophet, as Lord, as Bridegroom, he still retains the cohesion and the foundation of all, his priestly, or atoning, or intercessory office.

We have, in the next place, the bride. She also is to deck herself with jewels. I have often said, and I do not see anything irrational or unreasonable in supposing that it should be so, that precious stones are, in the beautiful

words of a poet, the scattered wrecks, the disintegrated fragments of Paradise. There are but two material things in this world that are perfectly beautiful; the flowers of summer, and the everlasting flowers that we call diamonds, and amethysts, and gems, and jewels. These are spoken of constantly in Scripture as beautiful. I have heard Christian persons say to me, Is it lawful to wear these things? It is perfectly lawful if you have paid for them, and it is certainly very beautiful to do so. Objectors quote a passage in Peter's Epistle, and ask, Does not Peter condemn such ornaments? Nothing of the sort. He says of women: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart." That language is comparative. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." It does not mean you are not to work for your daily bread; but that you are to work more for living bread than for daily bread. So in adorning with gems — you are not to pride yourself on, nor to make that your chief charm, your great attraction; your adorning is not to lie chiefly, mainly, far less exclusively in such things; but in the hidden man of the heart — that inner beauty which excels and eclipses all.

We read in the Apocalypse that the new Jerusalem has twelve precious stones for its foundation. Is there anything sinful in a diamond? I think it is most beautiful; it seems to my mind like a bit of Paradise — I mean material Paradise — still surviving. And there is nothing in a flower that is unlovely, but the very reverse; and perhaps these things will all be taken and consecrated to



adorn the palace of our King. Like a bride adorned with jewels. What is she? She gives up her own name; she gives up her own responsibilities; she takes her husband's name. Our name was Mara, the bitter; but this name becomes in Christ Naomi, the beautiful. She shall be called by a new name, and she will receive it when she joins in the new song. And then this bride, we are told, he will present to himself a glorious church. Read the 45th Psalm, and you will see a beautiful picture of the presentation of this bride to the Lord Jesus Christ; where he tells us: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favor. The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework; the virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought, they shall enter into the king's palace. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." What a magnificent scene will that be when the priestly Bridegroom, adorned with a mitre that never fades; having on his breastplate the precious stones, the Urim and the Thummim, shall, in the world that will be, present to himself this bride, now hidden, but then in bridal robes, in coronation garments; when the lightning of her loveliness shall cover the whole earth with its splendor; and a song of joy shall rise around that bridal, the marriage supper of the Lamb, the consummation of a long betrothal,



like a rainbow hovering round a fountain, for ever and ever ! Creation shall be spoiled of its most precious things to adorn the dwelling-place of our King. Depend upon it the devil is not to have the mastery ; the world is not to be his. Christ, Redeemer, King, Creator, shall return to reign.

## LECTURE VI.

### THE APOCALYPTIC GLORY.

LANGUAGE fails to express the glory of the world as it will be. Imagery, the noblest and most magnificent, sinks under the burden of beauty and grandeur.

“The sun shall be no more thy light by day : neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee ; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory,” &c. — *Isaiah xl.* 19—21.

PROPHECIES here expand into promises. It is asked perhaps, what distinction is there between these? A promise is a prophecy of a good thing. Prophecy is the prediction of good or evil, or neither good nor evil, as the case may demand ; but a promise is the prophecy of what is good. Each promise is the setting of a precious jewel ; each good thing the apple of gold fixed and placed in the network of silver. Faith seizes the great doctrinal truths of the Gospel, which come from, and shine with concentric splendor on him in whom all truths are harmony, and resting upon those doctrinal truths, and upon him who is the root of all and the end of all, faith feels and inspires

safety, confidence, and peace. But hope, on the other hand, seizes the promise, and feeds on the precious contents of the promise, and is refreshed by its perfume and elevated and enlarged by contemplating its beauty. Hope feeds on promises as bees feed on flowers, is satisfied and becomes strong. In other words, faith looks at what is written respecting the Rock of Ages, and feels at peace; hope lifts its eye, spreads its wing, and stretches its flight into that future of glory and of blessedness, and brings back into the present refreshment, peace, and joy. Extinguish faith, and there is no sense of security; extinguish hope, and there is no joy, or peace, or conscious blessedness imported into the present. It is plain we have much to do with the future. Man is made to look behind him; he is made to look above him; and he is made to look before him. He has a past, with all its brilliant historic truths; he has a present, with all its thrilling and momentous responsibilities; he has a future, with its glory and its gloom intermingled. When a Christian looks back he sees the Rock of Ages; when he looks up he sees the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; when he looks forward he sees a crown of glory, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. If this book contained only the history of the past, man would have very little to do with the future; if it contained only the duties of the present, he would have nothing to do with the past or the future; but it contains that past which is full of the most instructive precedents for us; it explains that present which is charged with duties that stretch into everlasting ages; and it takes the veil from that grand future to which all past ages have contributed, and in whose glory all past dispensations shall be perfected and crowned. It therefore teaches man to look

into the past, the present, and the future ; and from each, guided by the Spirit and taught by wisdom from on high, he may draw lessons of profit, or encouragement, or joy. It is certainly, one would think, most cheering to look away into that beautiful future in which are so many bright and blessed things ; to have something like a few sunbeams cast on this present arena of conflict ; this world of griefs and woes ; this place of farewells to the dying and mournings for the dead ; this scene of conflict and of struggle, where sun-streaks and shadows chase each other, if peradventure we may collect what will lighten the darkness and mitigate the gloom of the night that is now far spent.

We are therefore intimately related to and deeply concerned with the future ; and therefore we should look into the future through the telescope that God has fixed on Patmos. If you look through what man gives you, it is a very different result. Man gives us a kaleidoscope, looking through which we see a great many fantastic forms, and shapes, and colors, of no practical worth. God gives you the telescope, and looking through it, you will see the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, an innumerable company of angels, the spirits of just men made perfect ; Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. So far from this looking into the future through the divine telescope interfering with the performance of present duties, you will find that it will strengthen, and cheer, and encourage you in the discharge of every duty to your kind, to your family, and your God. If you look into the future merely by your own unaided imagination, and borrow troubles from it, thinking of a thousand calamities that may occur to-mor-

row, you thereby take into the present two days' troubles, while your God only gives you one day's strength to bear them. But if you look into the future — that future which to us is all sunshine — you take into the present not contingent troubles, but real blessings, which instead of weakening, sustain and strengthen you in the fulfilment of present duties. We take our duties from precepts; we take our joys from promises and prophecies. When we wish to see what we are to do, we open God's directive law; when we wish to have a little capital of sunshine on which to draw in order to cheer us, we look into God's sure word of prophecy and glorious promises, laden with blessings that never will be exhausted.

This whole passage is of course a prophecy, or if you like, a promise; whether prophecy or promise, it is full of a brilliant and magnificent future: "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." Whether this is to be universal, and to cover all the earth, or to be only local, as some suppose, and the peculiar privilege of Jerusalem, literally so called, it is clear it is a lift to a loftier region; it is the superseding of the imperfections of the present by the perfections of the future; it is the removal of all stain, alloy, imperfection in the heavenly bodies above, in the earth beneath, and the introduction of a state of things, whatever be its meaning, or however impenetrable its application, in which we shall have, in the language of the Apocalypse, no need of the sun, nor of the moon; for the glory of the Lord doth lighten that city; it will be the light and the joy thereof. Nor from this passage have we any reason, as some have imagined, to suppose that the sun and moon will be anni-

hilated. I do not believe that anything which God made will be annihilated; the only thing that will be annihilated is sin, but nothing else. Why should these glorious orbs that break upon our sight of a winter evening, with an apocalypse of beauty and magnificence too rich to be described, be extinguished? Why should that sun, enthroned in the firmament in more than regal glory, be annihilated? Why should the chaste moon, with her silvery beauty, be banished from her beaten path? Why should anything be annihilated that God has made? I can understand that what Satan has introduced should be presented to Satan again, so that he shall have all the credit of it; but what God has made shall be reconsecrated by his touch, and be presented to him an offering of glory and beauty acceptable on his altar for ever. God made all these things at the first — they are his still — Satan has no right to an atom of earth or a star in the sky. In this world he is not a king; he is a wicked and temporary usurper; and when Christ shall return, and all things shall be made new, sun, and moon, and stars will not be annihilated; but, in the language of this text, confirmed by the parallel language of the Apocalypse, the sun and moon shall not be seen, because of the intenser splendor of a glory that breaks upon the earth like the tides of an illuminated ocean — engulfing in its splendor all lesser glories. Why are the stars invisible at mid-day? Not because they have ceased to shine, but because they are lost in the intenser splendor of the risen sun. Why are the little pools upon the sea-sand invisible when the tide has risen? Not because their little channels or beds are not full, but because they are overflowed by the advancing tide. So when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, when the Sun of righteousness shall have risen with heal-



ing under his wings, the sun will not be annihilated, but paled by the richer lustre, nor will the moon cease to be, but to be seen in the blaze of a greater light. They are both necessary to the march of our earth, and to the balance of the orbs of the sky; but they will be so eclipsed and so lost in the excessive riches of that ever-rising tide of light that we shall, in the words of John, "have no need of the sun, nor of the moon; for the Lord is the light, and the Lamb is the glory thereof."

That there may be such a glory or such a light is perfectly feasible. In the ancient temple of Jerusalem, and in the holy of holies, there shone what was called the *shechinah*, that was the visible symbol of a present and propitious God; and that *shechinah*, kindled from heaven, lighted up the whole holy of holies with a glory that no eye but the high priest's could endure. When Saul was travelling to Damascus, such was the glory of the *shechinah* — that is, Christ's visible presence — that he was struck blind, and overwhelmed by the excess of light. And is it not reasonable to conceive that when this age shall be merged into a vastly better and brighter, when this unripe world shall have ripened on the tree of life, there will then come from heaven a glory so real, a splendor so bright, that as the stars and the moon are lost at mid-day and are invisible to us, the sun, and the moon, and the stars will be lost and invisible in the rays of a presence that shall never more be withdrawn? Hence he says: "Thy sun shall no more go down;" there will be no western declension — no gathering shades of evening — no pall or canopy of night; no eclipse to interrupt for a moment the brilliancy of that sunrise which shall break first upon the plains of Paléstine, and radiate till it cover the wide world with its glory, as the channels of the

ocean are covered with the waters of the great deep. "This light shall be an everlasting light;" not a transient gleam as on Mount Tabor; not a local and temporary splendor as in the chancel of the ancient temple; but "it shall be unto thee an everlasting light" — the light that lightens the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel, shall be everlasting.

One can well understand, though not fully comprehend, the clearness that will settle upon all things when that light shall dawn upon this world. Let us suppose that we are spared to see this light, this everlasting light — this light brighter than the brightest meridian sunshine. Suppose we try to look at creation in it; secondly, providence; thirdly, redemption — what a satisfying sight will each yield to us! Creation, reconsecrated and restored, will lie in its splendor like a diamond sparkling in the brilliant and the unclouded sunshine. Then we shall see it in a light in which we never gazed on it before; its dews sparkling like gems, its flowers amaranthine in their tints; their fragrance such as we have never yet inhaled; and throughout all the glory land all scenes beauty, all sounds music; no cold and dreary winter, no clouds to cover up the sky, no mist of tears to rise from the earth; the lion shall lie down with the lamb; every tide of evil shall ebb; every entanglement and perplexity shall be solved and unbraided; earth shall be restored to its Eden blessedness; and on every page of it, the stones, the trees, the flowers, the fields, the sun, the moon, the stars — we shall see fresh stores of beauty unsealed; we shall learn new lessons of light and love, such as never appeared in the history of the past, and in comparison of which the discoveries of geology, astronomy, and science are but the babbling of babes.

Let us suppose, in the next place, that we not only see creation in this new light, but providence also. Suppose that we are raised from the dead, these bodies clothed with immortality; suppose that standing in that glory land, upon some beautiful Tabor, with all Tabor's splendor, with nothing of its transience, that we are permitted, in the language of Scripture, to look back on all the way by which the Lord has led us — what a marvellous study will each Christian find as he turns over the leaves of memory in its light, and notices on what little things great and blessed issues depend; what accidents, as the world says, were the hinges of results that have turned him by God's grace from being a child of the wicked one into a child of God, an heir of the kingdom of heaven! You will then see, as you look back through the tangled web of providence, that there was a golden thread running through it all; that golden thread the guidance of God. You will then discover, what you cannot discover now, that the accidents of man were the missionaries of God; and that what you thought a random incident, alone, cold, and unfruitful, was really an ambassadress from heaven, sent down to direct you into the paths of righteousness and peace. You will then find as you take a review from that Tabor that I have supposed upon this illuminated, and consecrated, and blessed earth, that in the day when you said, All these things are against me, at that very moment all those things, without exception, were working together for good to you.

That loss over which you shed many bitter tears, that catastrophe in your home that almost broke your heart with grief, was no emanation from the wicked one, but an intimation from your Father, detaching your affections from things in grasping which you would have perished,

and fixing them upon unseen and glorious things, seizing which you live for ever. What you thought curses were blessings; what you called losses were gains; what you believed to be obstructions were really impulses; and poor blind man — for we have no idea how blind we are when we come to think of what God is — was led by a way that he knew not; and you will be constrained to repeat the 23d Psalm: My cup runneth over; he hath covered my table, though I did not see his hand, in the very presence of mine enemies: he hath made goodness and mercy to follow me all the days of my life; and now I shall dwell in his house for ever and ever.

For thousands of years in that blessed future in which I trust we have a foothold, and freehold, and an inheritance, one of the most delightful studies will be the retrospect of the past. When I look at my own past — will the reader say limited past? — my own past narrow horizon and experience, I do not find one single accident in anything that ever happened. Are you not where you are at this moment in consequence of the merest trifle that altered the current of your course through life? Are you not the husband of that wife, or the wife of that husband, in consequence of the most accidental meeting, as the world would call it, upon earth? Are you not at the head of that great mercantile concern, or at present a successful merchant, or a prosperous tradesman, in consequence of the veriest incident that floated like a bubble on life's troubled current; so trivial that at the moment you thought it not worth noticing? Is it not true that the great loss you sustained — the bitter bereavment of which you were the subject — the painful calamity that overtook you — brought you first to grope, and to feel, and to try to ascertain whether there was not some more

solid standing than this world can give, some more blessed hope than its great things and its good things can inspire? Do you not trace your deepest and most lasting impressions — impressions that stretch into everlasting glory, to losses, crosses, bereavements, troubles, and trials you deplored at the time, but which you feel you must celebrate as ministering angels of God through the endless ages of eternity? Such will be our retrospect in that light.

Let us try to see how redemption will look in that light. If the book of creation, at present so blotted, then so beautifully rewritten; if the book of providence, which at present we are reading, some with tears, others in sunshine, shall furnish so interesting a text as read from that Tabor, how much more glorious will be the study of redeeming love! — that mystery which we shall ever be searching, that memory that will ever be uppermost, that song we shall never be weary of singing, that lesson we shall always delight to study.

That there are now great perplexities in the scheme of redemption it would be absurd to deny. Why God permitted sin to come into our world, with all its dislocating and disruptive forces, is a mystery we cannot solve. How it can be true that God has chosen some to everlasting life, and yet that to every human being instant pardon, happiness, and peace, without money and without price, are freely offered in Christ Jesus, I cannot solve; how, notwithstanding God's wish and desire that none should perish, for he has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, yet that thousands of mankind should be left ignorant of the truth, enemies to the Gospel of Christ, is a mystery we cannot now clear up. But what we do not know now, and cannot know, not because these things are dark, but because our minds are so blind — not because these



truths are impossible, but because our horizon is so limited — we shall know hereafter. And when we see the Saviour in the midst of us, the marks of the nails in his hands, the traces of the thorny crown about his brow; the memorials of Calvary and the cross enshrined in the glory that is unspeakable; when we shall see him no longer from amidst the vapors of time, through the veil of mortality, and by a glass darkly, but face to face, and as he is, there will not be a Christain there who will not then repeat the very words of Sheba's queen, and say: "We had not been told of half his glory." We shall see then in him all that prophets have proclaimed, all that poets have sung, all that evangelists have told us; but magnified and glorified a thousand-fold. What a study is the human soul! what a marvellous study will be God manifest in the flesh! What a study will be creation, providence, redemption, with all their interlacing and intermingling lights and glories, and links, and lineaments!

I can see in heaven not a place where we ceaselessly sing psalms; I can see in the future not a place where we are like monks in their cells, insulated solitaires in their niches; but the everlasting home; the beautiful and blessed fireside; our father's roof-tree; the melting of all the families of time into that grand family that fills heaven and earth; whose elder brother is Christ, whose father is God, whose home is infinitude, whose life-time is eternity. What a transporting study will that be! how sweetly shall we speak together of these things! how gladly and joyfully, and with what interest, shall each repeat the story of his marvellous restoration! with what intense delight shall we study those things that sin has darkened, that imperfection now mars, that our blindness conceals from us! with what ecstasy and delight shall we look to



that Saviour, as the greatest, truest, most precious benefactor in the universe, who rescued us not from a temporal calamity, but redeemed us by his blood from an inexhaustible and terrible curse! Instead of yearning to remain where we are, sometimes, as one views the splendor of the scene, and catches a view of its reflected beams, one is constrained to wish: "Oh that I had wings like a dove, that I might flee away and be at rest!" Whom have I in heaven, blessed Jesus, but thee? and there is none upon the earth I desire besides thee. My heart and my flesh faint and fail; but thou, Prince of Peace, art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever and ever!

It is added here: "Thy God shall be thy glory;" that is to say, in that day Jesus Christ, God manifested in the flesh, shall be our glory. We are too prone in this dispensation to glory in things we ought not to glory in; the wise man in his wisdom, the rich man in his riches. That which is uppermost in each of our hearts to all practical purposes is our glory. It is not said that you are not to love what is beautiful, or to desire what is useful; all that we contend for is, that while these things are to have a place, a subordinate place, Christ crucified and glorified is to have the supreme and dominant place. We do not say that you are not to be thankful if God prosper you; that you are not to be grateful if you have a happy and a peaceful fireside; that you are not to be glad when God adds to your means of doing good, and to your store of enjoyment. God has not put us into this world to be monks and nuns; there is no merit in starving one's self, or in persecuting and punishing one's flesh; we are to use the world, not as the monks do, run away from it, but as not abusing it; they that marry, which is lawful,

but as if they married not; they that use the world, or possess it, as not abusing it, but recollecting the time is short, and that the fashion of the world speedily passeth away.

But we are very prone, with our imperfect nature, to glory in these things, and to make them in our hearts supreme things. So did the man feel when he was invited to Christ's festival: "I have bought oxen" — that was his sole thing: another, "I have bought a farm" — that was his dominant thought: another, "I have married a wife" — that was his supreme object of joy. These things are right; the love of them and the appreciation of them are good. Why should you not love your farm; why not love your warehouse; why not love your trade, your profession, your business, your wife, your children? All this is not only lawful, but dutiful. But then the instant you put these things in the room of a higher object you derange the harmony of the soul; all these must be subordinated to a sublimer passion; and so subordinated that "he that doth not hate mother and father, sister and brother, and wife, and follow me, cannot be my disciple." When we shall see Christ, we shall find in him our glory; with him all the riches of the universe; by him all perfection, and beauty, and joy; from him all the blessings of the footstool, all the dignities of the throne; and finally, to him we shall render glory, and honor, and blessing, and praise; world without end.

And adds the prophet, in words that crown the whole: "The days of thy mourning shall be ended." What a happy finale will that be! There is no cheek that has not sometimes been the channel of a flood of tears; there is no heart, however bounding now, that has not sometimes been breaking. There is no bright and sunny face that

has not sometimes been clouded by sorrow. There is no home into which death has not penetrated; no household in which there is not one chair empty; no flock in which there is not one dead lamb; there are few families that have not a freehold in a grave upon earth, and a near and dear one who has crossed the great Atlantic of time, and now lives and reigns with God and with the Lamb on the other side. It is a world full of farewells to the dying and of mournings for the dead. But in that blessed world, in that glory-filled land, in that beautiful bay into which all the troubled surf of time shall break, and be stilled for ever, there is no tear shed, no sigh heaved — there will be no sin in the heart to vex it, no cloud upon the conscience to darken it — no pillow for the sick — no sods broken for the dead — no vigils by the dying. In that sweet and everlasting rest there will be no plague, nor pestilence, nor famine, nor death, nor murder, because there is no sin; there will be no suffering and no sorrow for ever. In words grander than those of Isaiah, though kindled from the same everlasting light — words full of music, that sound like a burst of celestial harmony: “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.” “And I saw,” says the seer again, in words full of poetry, and not fuller of poetry than of truth, “I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day ; for there shall be no night there." " The days of thy mourning shall be ended."

What is the ground of all this felicity ? The prophet tells us : " Thy people shall be all righteous." That is the secret of all — clad in a righteousness which is perfect ; inspired by a righteousness which is progressive now, but completed then. What is the future ? call it the millennium ; call it the rest that remaineth for the people of God ; call it the everlasting sabbath or the world that will be — I care not what is the name, if it be a scriptural one — what is it ? A prepared place for a prepared people, a holy place for a holy people, a royal place for a royal race. We have no righteousness to entitle us to enter there that is our own ; but we are told his righteousness is unto all that will accept it, and it is upon all that will believe in it. If you be righteous in the righteousness of Christ ; that is to say, if you are now submitting to be saved in God's way ; you have washed your robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. You can say to Christ, Blessed Jesus, I know I have forfeited heaven ; I know I deserve hell ; but oh, my Lord, thou wast wounded for my sins, thou wast bruised for mine iniquities ; the chastisement of my peace was upon thee ; on thee were laid the iniquities of us all. Blessed Lord, I believe this ; I lay my stress of heart, and hope, and prospect of eternal joy upon this. So doing, you have, in the words of the Apocalypse, " washed your robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb ;" so doing — simple as it is ; and plain as it was to look at the brass serpent, and be well ; or to run under the shelter of the city of refuge, and be protected — you have put on the wedding garment ; not woven it, not washed it, not bought

it ; but you have put it on by Christ offering it to you for that purpose ; and if there be truth in the Scriptures, if there be a hope in heaven, the man that thus submits to let Christ save him is justified and will be sanctified ; his present condition is, “ there is no condemnation ; ” his future safety is, “ nothing shall be able to separate him from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus the Lord.”

Do we not feel that dim as our light is, cold as our love is, feeble as our trust is, that bright spot in our hearts which the Sun of righteousness has illuminated, and kindled, and keeps burning there, we would not surrender for a world ? for it tells us, in Christ alone is our glory, our peace, our hope ; and we are not ashamed before the universe boldly and fearlessly to say so. Oh, may we be found at that day redeemed and justified and glorified in that light which has no need of the sun nor of the moon, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the light thereof !

## LECTURE VII.

### THE BRIGHTENING PATHWAY.

As the believer wends his way upward to the glorious rest, he finds his ascent brightening as he rises from the grey morning twilight into the eternal and unclouded noon, for

“The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”— *Prov. iv. 18.*

PRIVILEGE in a Christian is always translated into practice. The path that begins at a cross does not deviate, nor swerve, nor disappear till it is lost and merged amidst the splendors of a crown. If Christ be that path beginning at a cross, and Christ all and in all the way that leads to heaven, to happiness, to God, walking in that path we shall find the appropriate illustration of our progress in “the shining light” of the morning, “that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

Who is the just man? There is none that is just, not one. The word “righteous” denotes simply “just.” What is justice? Character squared by a perfect and infallible law. If we be not just, can we be made so?



All Scripture tells us we have broken God's law — we have swerved from the perfect rule — we have gone astray from the straight, the onward and the upward path — we have ceased to do those things that we ought to do, and therefore we cannot live by them. Therefore the question asked by Job on his eastern plains still may be asked by us: "How shall man be just before God?" Not by deeds of law, for if fromt his day we could be perfect, what becomes of the past period of our life in which we have broken that law in thought, in word, and in deed? But the very idea of perfection upon earth is the most Utopian dream. None are farther from perfection than those who think they are now treading its high and perfect level, and that whoever may be wrong God knows they are all that they should be. Then how are we to be just before God? There are two senses in which we may be described as just men; first, justified by Christ's righteousness, done for us, imputed to us; the alone, the perfect, the indefeasible right to heaven's highest height and to God's holiest and happiest presence; and secondly, we become just men by the work of the Spirit of God within us, removing the heart of stone, scattering the prejudices that cloud our eyesight, breaking the force of the passions that enslave us, and fitting us by an inner character for that glory to which we have become entitled by an outer righteousness received by faith and imputed to us.

In a well-known Catechism called the Shorter Catechism, the question is asked: "What is justification?" "Justification is an act" — mark the words — "an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by

faith alone." What a happy definition is that! how perfect and how conclusive! But when it requires an answer to the question: "What is sanctification?" "Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit." Mark well the distinction; justification is an *act*, it is a forensic act, a sentence pronounced, finished, and done with; so much so that the Christian who is justified to-day is as much justified as he will be through eternity; and the poorest, weakest, most vacillating Christian is as much entitled to heaven as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the apostle Paul, the evangelist John, or any of the apostles. Our right to heaven has no degrees; it is perfect; it is not ours, but Christ's. Our sins were never his when he died for us; his righteousness is never ours when we are justified by it. Our sins imputed to him brought him to that agony and bloody sweat; his righteousness imputed to us will lift us to that crown of glory that fadeth not.

He was perfectly innocent when he cried in fearful agony, "It is finished;" and you and I when we plant our first footstep on that margin that separates grace from glory, time from eternity, shall at that very moment feel that we are miserable sinners; and the only reason why we shall be there accepted, welcomed by a thousand congratulating voices, will be not that we deserve it, but that Christ Jesus has deserved it for us. But what is sanctification defined to be? Justification is "an act," sanctification is "a work;" it is not a deed done, it is a process. "Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled"—it is progressive—"more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness." In these we have the picture of the just man; our justification so perfect in its nature that omniscience cannot see a flaw in

it; our sanctification God knows so imperfect that we are needing our imperfections and our sins not only every day, but every hour and every second, pardoned and purified. Our title to heaven is perfect, and nothing can disturb it; it is not to be shaken even by our weak faith. We often find a Christian whose faith is very weak. He is beset perhaps by physical weakness, by bodily disease, by depressing and disturbing inroads from a thousand sources; his faith does faint, his heart is cast down, and he thinks that now all is wrong with him. It is a blessed thought that when our faith fails Christ's righteousness remains; that our justification is not the tenacity of our faith, the intensity of our love, nor the strength of our convictions, but the finished righteousness of the Son of God, and justified by that righteousness we may have peace with God. Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit. He inlays the heart with purity — he illuminates the understanding with light — he restores to the memory the elastic spring it has lost, and ripens us and fits us for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

Having seen the subject of this, the just man, let us turn our attention to his history. His history is "like the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The first truth taught in this illustration is that a Christian's path, often zigzag, is still on the whole steadily progressive. We know that when the light begins to break in the grey morning twilight it increases in splendor in the eastern sky until at noontide the whole heaven and earth are filled with its beauty. So it is with the Christian: grace, a germ in his heart, planted there by God, can no more be extinguished than the throne of Deity can be upset. He will not, he says himself, break the bruised reed, he will not quench the smok-

ing flax ; and however dim the light that is in your heart now, if it should be the grey, cold, misty morning light of infant day, as sure as it is true day so sure will it increase in splendor and in progress, till it is lost in the glories of high, happy, eternal noon. You never saw a morning break and evening come on before twelve o'clock. As sure as the sun rises, so sure he will sweep through the circle that is assigned him till he set in the west. So a Christian with the least atom of grace in his heart, with the least grey, struggling beam of misty morning light in his soul, will advance slowly or swiftly, but surely to noonday. His path is progressive from grace to glory.

A second thought suggested by the illustration, that the Christian's path is like the shining light, is that his progress is beyond the reach of all arrest and must defy all resistance wherever and from whatever quarter it arrives. Have you ever looked upon the morning sunrise amid a mountain range ? If so you have seen how the first beams begin to tip with golden splendor the loftiest crags. I think the rosy light that appears at sunrise on the Alps is the most heavenly, and most beautiful, and most glorious material thing that one can witness upon earth. The light begins first of all to tip the edges of the ice upon the highest parts of the mountains ; by-and-by clouds begin to gather and mists threaten to intercept his beams. If you had never learned the history and the success of the sun's march you would begin to despair of his progress and to expect he will set before his noon. But what do you find ? That by-and by the clouds that threatened to obstruct his advance, by the very fervor of his beams are dissolved in showers that refresh the fainting violet and add volume to the mountain streams ; and the mists that threatened to intercept his splendor are dissolved by

that very splendor, and scattered, and wholly disappear. So it is with the path of the Christian. The marshes of envy, hatred, ill-will, send up from their deep and pestilential swamps fogs and vapors that seem to shroud his sight and delay his march till he seems to threaten to set at noon; but onward he moves guided by an inspiration that is not from beneath, and therefore is not dependent on anything on earth; guided by a light that is fed from an inexhaustible and an inextinguishable fountain; till we see the fogs dispersed, and the clouds scattered, and standing on the loftiest height of a Highland mountain we can hear the thunders roll below, and see the mists dissolve deep down in the glen, while eternal sunshine settles upon its head. Not the least precious text in the Bible, if one may make a comparison, is: "I," says the Saviour, "give unto them" — to whom? These poor sheep, some of whom had gone astray, others of whom were fainting and ready to go astray again — "I give unto them eternal life, and none shall be able to pluck them out of my hand." Sooner may Canute repel the advancing waves of the ocean, sooner may Xerxes bind the Hellespont with his royal chains, sooner may Caligula successfully command the clouds that they shall not rain upon his imperial head, than any power in Satan, in the world, or in the world's wicked ones extinguish the light, or arrest the march, or deaden the life, or dim the glory of the humblest child of God and heir of Christ Jesus.

A third trait in the Christian's course is, that his path is not only progressive and victorious, but luminous; it makes all things around it and about it luminous. When we first see the sun rise he rises behind some huge hill that seems to intercept his beams completely; and if you had no experience of his march you would suppose he



would never get above the level of that hill. You notice, too, how trees and forests seem to obstruct his advance; you wait patiently, and from experience now hopefully, for the time when he will ascend above them all; till the very objects that seem to obstruct his advancing splendor he turns into media and mirrors for reflecting it far and wide. Very soon the trees of the forest become like shafts of light; the very rocks that obstructed his light begin to reflect that light as if they were diamonds, and the broad sea itself consents to be the mirror of his glory, and the clouds put on all the colors of rubies, and amethysts, and sapphires; and everything that threatened at first to the inexperienced eye to impede his advancing path he turns into mirrors of glory, and beauty, and magnificence, to serve his purposes and to reflect his light.

So it is with the Christian's progress — the objects that seem at first to obstruct his path and to extinguish his light he makes by a power that is not his own mirrors and reflectors of it. Peter was cast into prison, his limbs were bound with chains; but through the iron prison-bars of that dungeon in Palestine there broke forth a glory that shone from Dan to Beersheba, and covered finally the whole land with its light. The Apostle Paul was cast into the Mamertine dungeon in Rome, because in spite of Cæsar's inhibition he would preach to the perishing poor the unsearchable riches of Christ. But what was the result? The effect of that imprisonment was that he made converts in Cæsar's household; that from the shops, and the markets, and the army and the navy of imperial Rome advocates of Christ stepped forth; and by-and-by the legions of Cæsar felt the light reflected from the character and audible in the words of that prisoner in the Mamertine dungeon. The author of the Apocalypse was banished



because of his faithfulness to a solitary isle in the *Ægean* Sea ; but what a splendor has shone from that island ! what a glory dwelt in *Patmos* ! what a sunrise streamed in its varied apocalyptic splendors from a solitary island in the bosom of the deep ! I might add *Bunyan* at *Bedford*, and innumerable others of whom the world was not worthy. What an evidence that not only is the Christian's path progressive, not only does it conquer obstructions, but that it seizes the obstructions and makes them luminous with its own light and splendid with its own lustre !

The sun's path when he rises in the morning and moves towards his meridian is a victorious path. He not only makes other objects luminous, but he conquers them and turns them into his own service. The mountain peaks become like telegraphic intimations to the world that the king of day has risen from his orient couch and is on his royal march. The tints of every flower, if they could speak would say : O sun, we are created by thee ! The fruits that ripen if they could speak would say : O sun, we are ripened by thee ! and the dewdrops if they could speak would say : We are made beautiful, more beautiful than the diamonds that sparkle from the noblest hand or adorn the costliest diadem — we are made so by thee ; and the warm earth bursting into verdure, and the intelligent world feeling his warmth, would say : We are blessed and benefitted by thee. Thus the sun in his march conquers and turns into subjects of his sway those that either obstructed it, or were ignorant of it, or those at least that needed to feel its influence and its power. Such is an illustration of the path of a Christian. He lays his hand on things that are neutral and makes them contributories to his sacred designs. He seizes elements that are hostile

and consecrates them to the work and way of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He takes, for instance, printing, that most marvellous discovery, and he makes it subservient to the highest cause, the noblest interests, the divinest ends. I know not any earthly discovery that has so much changed the world as that of printing. The most marvellous thing in the world is that speeches can be spoken at night, and that speakers may be speaking at two o'clock or three o'clock in the morning, and that you can read their speeches, not you only, but hundreds of thousands, next morning perfectly reproduced and reflected. The Christian, seeing great power in the printing-press, employs it; seeing great power in speech, he employs it; recognizing the means of glorifying Christ by missions, he charters the ocean steamer, consecrating it to the noblest of ends. Thus the Christian's path becomes a victorious one, making the weakest things contribute to God's praise, and the most reluctant things trophies of God's glory; waiting patiently for that day when all sounds shall be harmony, when all sights shall be beauty, when all feelings shall be bliss, when all hearts shall be bounding and none breaking, and the Prince of Peace shall sway his benign and glorious sceptre from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.

Let me notice one other feature in the sun's rise — his path is a beneficent path. He warms the air as he rises which the invalid is to breathe; he ripens the corn for the sickle of the reaper, when nature recognizing his beneficence and bounty sits amid her ripe sheaves like a mother amid her children blessing and praising God; he sets the bird as he gains power in his march to build its nest, and the farmer to plant and sow; he rends the Polar ice to be a pathway for the imprisoned ship to return to her own

shores; and the invalid, feeling the approach of summer, thanks God, and takes hope that the lease of life is likely to be a little longer. His whole path therefore is beneficent. So with the Christian — he walks through the world a blessing, a shower of blessings. Made himself a light from on high, he lets his light so shine that others seeing his good works may glorify his Father which is in heaven. Let me ask, are you thus beneficent? What nook in London has one ray more because you are a Christian? What young or old person in England has a happy memory of you having come into contact with him or with her? What miserable den has been illuminated by the light and splendor of your presence? Of all poor unhappy people upon earth that from the very heart I pity, it is those who like a vortex are always absorbing, and never like a fountain welling up in refreshing blessings upon the earth and amidst mankind.

We do not know sufficiently the luxury of doing good; and one marvels that any one can walk through this world and not feel it to be an instinct of humanity, and one marvels yet more at what is all but impossible, that any man can be a Christian, and traverse the city, the market, the street, the school, the cottages of the poor, the homes of the wretched, the dens of the depraved, and not try to leave on some spot a memory more glorious than if you had built a magnificent cathedral, and write upon some heart an inscription that will be luminous amidst the light and glories of the eternal morn. For we all know and we ought to feel, what we are very prone to forget, that whilst we are justified by a righteousness that is not our own, that does not excuse us from doing good, but is the mightiest motive-spring to do the highest, the intensest, and the noblest good. And certainly if we may take the

picture of the future from that book whose portraits are perfect because inspired, we there read: "Make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." What does this mean? It is this; you have got wealth, and wealth does not mean enormous sums; any one who has sixpence beyond what he needs is a rich man; he who has only £100 a year and lives on £99 is a rich man, while he who has £100,000 a year and lives on £120,000 a year is a very poor man indeed; but if you have something over, what are you to do with it? The answer is, as a Christian you are to consecrate it to the service of God and the good of your fellow-men. But how will the objects of it receive you into everlasting habitations? What I understand by it is this: that those you have benefitted by your liberality, those you have made wiser and happier by your contributions, the widow's heart you have made to sing for joy, the orphan child you have inspired with a sublime hope, or clothed and sheltered from the cold by the raiment you have given him, will stand at the very gates of heaven amidst the throngs that are there and bid you welcome, recognizing in you a benefactor, giving God the glory. That does not mean that it entitles you to heaven, but "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, they rest from their labors and their works do follow them." The cup of cold water that you give to a disciple is not forgotten; because it is not merit we do not therefore say it is not fruit; it is the fruit of grace, it is the evidence of a regenerated heart. And you, if I address such, who minister to the world, to the unenlightened light, to the hungry bread, to the naked raiment, to the ignorant instruction, to all a blessing, rejoice that God has honored you to make you instruments of such good-

ness; be not proud — God forbid! because it is to grace that you owe all; but be thankful that you are tasting of the highest happiness, which imperial Cæsar had not learnt to recognize — the luxury, the noble, the sublime luxury of doing the greatest good to the greatest number of mankind.

A time draws near when all the clouds that refuse now to be scattered, and all the mists that need to be dissolved, will pass away. At present the sun even in his meridian is in some degree horizontal; but one day the sun will be vertical, and there will be no shadow, and yet there will be no intolerable fervor. At present the best is accompanied with shadows, the purest has the alloy of imperfection; but at that day when the sun shall reach his meridian throne, and shed down no perishable splendor, and shall have no western declension, to be buried in the banks of clouds that gather in the west, but shall shine with a splendor that is never intercepted by a cloud, and never can be wasted by time; then we shall no more look through this body as a poor, thick, rugged glass darkly, nor through this dim medium as an imperfect, twisted, distorted mirror dimly, but we shall see even as we are seen, know even as we are known; and as the material part of our nature becomes thinner, and the spiritual and the nobler becomes stronger, we shall begin to see something of the glory before we plunge into it; for it is remarkable that the most eminent Christians in the hour of death have seemed to have seen lifted a nook of the veil that intercepts our view of the eternal world, and to have caught sights, and to have heard sounds, and to have tasted a prelibation and an earnest of that blessedness which shall have no bounds and no end, the blessedness of being forever with the Lord.



## LECTURE VIII.

### THE JEWISH WORSHIPPERS.

THE cast out and cast down, but not cast off children of Abraham have before them a glorious restoration, for

“It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.”—*Isaiah xi. 11.*

ENSIGN is the translation of the Hebrew word Jehovah nissi; “the Lord our standard.” The same Hebrew word is applied to the brass serpent; “Ye shall make a serpent of brass, and set it up for a *niss*, a standard.” From these two expressions we may justly infer that the standard, or ensign, to be set up in the future is the Saviour himself; and this, therefore, is the true solution of that prediction in Matthew xiv. 27: “Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven,” *i. e.* the ensign, the standard. When that ensign, or standard, shall be lifted



up, all nations shall see it, and the last and concluding conflict of this economy will take place. The lifting up of this ensign will be the signal for assembling God's scattered people, the tribes of Judah and of Benjamin, which are in our sight; and the assembling from their hiding-places, wherever those hiding-places are, of the ten tribes of Israel now out of sight. The promise shall be literally fulfilled: "He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel" — that is, the ten tribes — "and gather together the dispersed of Judah" — that is, the two tribes — "from the four corners of the earth."

The Jews were the only nation upon earth for whom God selected and consecrated a land. For them he chose the land of Canaan, and to them we read he gave it for a possession for ever. He selected no land for the Greek, no territory for the Roman; but for his people Israel he selected a land, and to that people in the fulness of time he made it over. To them he has still promised it, in words that are not exhausted, as a possession and a heritage for ever. Genesis xii. 7: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." Genesis xiii. 15: "To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." Genesis xvii. 8: "I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan." Genesis xxvi. 3: "Unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries;" speaking to Isaac. Genesis xxxv. 12, to Jacob he says: "The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land." We invariably read that the land was given to the children of Abraham as an everlasting possession. The question arises, why then do they not possess it now? We find on referring to the Book of Deu-

teronomy that it was given to them accompanied with certain conditions, observing which they should remain in the land, trampling which under foot they should be cast out of the land, and scattered amid all the nations of the earth. In Deuteronomy xxviii. 15, we read: "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee." These curses are enumerated here at great length: "The Lord shall smite thee with blindness, and thou shalt grope at noonday; thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes; the fruit of thy land, and all thy labors, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway;" and so on to the end of the chapter. The Jews did not keep God's commandments; and therefore they were cast out of that land. But the question remains, are they cast out forever? or is it theirs still in reversion? Will their return to the observance of the statutes and the ordinances of their God be their reflux as a nation into the land of their fathers, and their resettlement in the midst of that land? In the same book which records the curse that their disobedience brought down, and their dispersion as a portion of that curse, we read, at the 30th chapter, commencing at the 1st verse: "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity,

and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee; and the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." That promise has not been fulfilled; their return from Babylon was not the fulfilment of it; they are here spoken of as dispersed amidst all the nations of the earth; and that out of the four corners of heaven and out of Babylon God will collect them, and they shall turn with their whole hearts to the Lord, and shall seek the face of him against whom they have so deeply and so egregiously rebelled. In Jeremiah xxx. we find a promise of this return not only to the two tribes, but to all: "For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah." At the 10th verse: Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel; for lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet; and none shall make him afraid." We have, first, the promise of the land for ever; we have, secondly, their forfeiture of the possession of it by their sins; thirdly, God's promise that if they will repent of these sins and return unto him, he will replant them in the land, and settle them in it, and so fulfil his ancient promise: "To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."

Now it is also worthy of notice that in the punishment inflicted upon the Jews there are two distinct penalties. First, of the ten tribes, it is said in 2 Kings xvii. 18 : "He removed them out of sight ;" and therefore at this day nobody knows where they are ; secondly, it is said of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin : "They shall be scattered in the sight of all nations." Mark what precision is in the prophecy. Of the ten tribes he predicted that they should be removed utterly out of sight, so that nobody could say where they are ; but of the two tribes he says : "They shall be scattered in the sight of all nations," a proverb and a by-word, with no rest for the soles of their feet. That distinction has been kept up. But he says of both, whilst the two tribes are dispersed in the sight of all nations, so that everybody can lay his finger upon one and another, and say, That is a Jew ; the ten tribes are scattered and dispersed, but hidden from the sight of all nations. Jeremiah xxx. 11 : "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee ; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." Literally has this been fulfilled ; he has made an end of the Greek, he has made an end of the Roman. Where are the inhabitants of proud Ninevah ? where are the people of Thebes, with its hundred gates ? where are the nations of heathendom ? where is Palmyra in the desert ? where are the proud and boasting inhabitants of Babylon ? where are the once mighty Medo-Persian armies ? God has made a full end of them. But if you ask, where is the Jew ? the answer is, where is he not ? He is in every land ; a people dispersed and scattered, a by-word, in the sight of the nations, as far as relates to the two tribes ; and the ten tribes are buried out of sight,

according to the prophecy that God would hide them from the sight of all nations.

When you read the passages that predict the restoration of this people, bear in mind the punishment has been literal; literally they have been dispersed, literally they have been a by-word, literally they are intermingled with all nations, and are found in the sight of all nations. When you find these very calamities reversed in promises, and the curses turned into prophecies of blessings, is it not logical, and reasonable, and fair to understand by the reversal of the curse their literal restoration to their own land? What is the curse? Dispersion, removal into all nations. What is the reversion of that curse? Their restoration to their own land. Therefore these words are to be literally fulfilled: "The Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria," that is probably part of Mesopotamia, from the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates, "from Egypt," and from the neighborhood of the Nile, "and from Pathros, and from Cush," or Ethiopia; "and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath;" and that there may be no place from which he will not recover them, "from the islands of the sea. The envy also of Ephriam," that is, the ten tribes, "shall depart; and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephriam," the ten tribes, "shall not envy Judah," the two tribes; "and Judah shall not vex Ephriam."

Is it possible, even if it be very difficult, to ascertain, or rather to guess where the ten tribes are? I have collected all that seems to have been ascertained by way of answer to this question. The first hint that we have of the place into which the ten tribes were driven is in 2 Kings xvii. 6, where he refers to the cities of the Medes, places



north of Persia, to which the ten tribes should be driven. In what is called an apocryphal book, a book not inspired, and only of use as a human history, the 2d Book of Esdras, the 13th chapter, the writer says: "The ten tribes entered on the territory of the Euphrates, and travelled upward a year and a half." Now tribes travelling up the Euphrates, if you trace its course upon a map, and moving for a year and a half, at the slow pace at which ancient or nomad tribes travelled, would reach Central Asia, or the neighborhood of Thibet, or Tartary, or China. So far we see the route that the ten tribes took on going to their banishment; we see the starting point, and the river along the banks of which they travelled; and the natural and just inference is that they settled somewhere about Thibet, or Tartary, or China. Then it is a very remarkable evidence of their being placed somewhere in the East that the wise men that came to the Saviour with incense, to worship him who was born King of the Jews, several ancient writers believe to have been delegates and representatives of the lost ten tribes. Recollect that Christ was born amid the two tribes in Jerusalem. These wise men spoke of having seen his star. What did they know about his star? They read in their own Bible the prophecy, "A star shall rise out of Jacob," and recognized that star which appeared in the heavens as the fulfilment of the prophecy of a star rising out of Jacob; and then following its leadings, they came to the infant Jesus; and there they recognized him as King of the Jews. Taking all these thoughts together, it seems highly probable that the wise men from the East, bearing incense, coming to worship on the ground of having seen the fulfilment of a prophecy in the Old Testament, and recognizing him as the King of the Jews, were just a deputation from the



now lost and hidden ten tribes of Israel ; so that the ten tribes might by their representatives recognize him that was born as the light to lighten the Gentiles, and one day to be the glory of his people Israel.

Another very confirmatory evidence of the ten tribes being somewhere beyond the Euphrates is what Josephus, the Jewish historian, states to have been said by Agrippa when he addressed a body of Jews in the following words : " Why do you Jews stretch your hopes beyond the river Euphrates ? Do you think your fellow-tribes will come to your aid ? Besides, if they would come, the Parthians would not permit them." This was said to the tribes of Judah 1800 years ago ; and evidently Agrippa's impression was that the ten tribes were somewhere near the Parthians and beyond the Euphrates, in some place the locality or nature of which I do not know, which he calls *Adia bene*. And Jerome, the Latin Father, who wrote in the 4th century, in a note upon the prophet Hosea says : " Unto this day the ten tribes are subject to the kings of the Persians ; nor has their captivity ever been loosened."

A very learned Jew of the 12th century, and a very extensive traveller, states that the names of various places in Central Asia are found to be Hebrew, and thereby give indication that the Jews have been there. It is highly probable that at this moment somewhere in Thibet, in Tartary, or in China, the lost ten tribes are existing. The growing complications in China, the disturbances in the East, the strange fanatical tribe of rebels, retaining Scripture truths in their creed, while in their practice repudiating them, indicate that China, or Tartary, or Thibet, is the hiding-place of the ten tribes of Israel. And just as the star in the firmament, the meteor star, gathered Judah and the ten tribes around the cradle of the new-born

King, so the ensign lifted up amid the nations will bring the ten tribes from their lurking-place, and Judah and Benjamin from their dispersion; and they shall crown him whom their fathers crucified as Lord and King of all. Such then are the only evidences I have been able to gather upon the present condition of the ten tribes and the two tribes.

I may now turn to some of those passages that seem to me to prove that the whole of the curse will be reversed; that Palestine will again be re peopled; that it will be the loveliest and the most fertile and beautiful of all lands; that Jerusalem will be rebuilt and restored, and ultimately filled with the glory of the great King — at least I cannot understand the clear, and specific, and reiterated promises and prophecies relating to this subject in any other than a strictly literal sense and interpretation. For instance, we read in Ezekiel xxxvi. 24: “I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.” This will be apparently not after their conversion, but before their conversion. You heard me say in a previous lecture they will be restored to their own land by the aid of the Gentiles, and in all probability by our own land; but their conversion to God will be by the inspiration of the Spirit of God. Let us mark well the words, Ezekiel xxxvi. 24. First of all, “I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.” Mark what follows: “*Then* will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean;” the restoration first, the regeneration and the conversion next.

So we find in Zechariah, now, a prophecy written long after the first captivity, and in the 12th chapter, where he predicts the restoration of the Jews, he says in the 10th

verse, or rather God says: "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart." All this shows that they will be, in their own land, resettled as tribes; and whilst they are there God will pour out his Spirit upon them; and those tribes, where they pierced the suffering Saviour, shall look upon the Prince of Peace; and him whom their fathers crucified, rejected, and despised, they will trust in, worship, and adore for ever.

It would seem, in the next place, as if the first thing that the Jews will do when they are restored will be to rebuild their temple. I need not tell you that many Jews abroad have been for some time collecting money to build the temple in Jerusalem. This may be a pretence; it may be a vain and a hopeless attempt—that is very probable; but it indicates what is their disposition, desire, and passion. If we turn not to what they are doing, but to the Word of God, in Zechariah vi. we read, at the 12th verse: "Behold the man whose name is The Branch;" that is Jesus; "and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall

build the temple of the Lord ; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne ; and he shall be a priest upon his throne ; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Here is some temple to be built by the Saviour, not by the Jews. And then in Ezekiel xl., where we have the description of that temple — a most beautiful description — we read that its name shall be Yehovah Shammai, "the Lord is there." A very distinguished architect at my request took the points that I gave him from the closing chapters of Ezekiel, and sketched the whole plan ; and the result of the sketch was that Ezekiel's temple can be built in a certain part of Palestine, and only in one part, and that part specified in the prophecy ; and when finished, this eminent architect said it would be the most magnificent and splendid edifice that suns ever rose or set upon. People say, But is it not unworthy that there should be a temple ? Not at all. Why should there not be a magnificent temple, filled with the glory of Him whose glory filled the temple of old ; in which there shall be no sacrifices of bulls, and goats, and lambs ; but in which shall be the glory between the cherubim, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ; around whom in concentric zones millions shall meet, and cast their crowns in golden showers at his feet, and say : "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor and glory, and praise, and to have dominion for ever and ever."

To show that this may be literal, let me quote some of the prophecies relating to our Lord's connection in the future with Jerusalem. In Isaiah xxiv. 23, it is said : "The Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." I must take this to be literal. If you say, Mount Zion means the

church, and Jerusalem means the church, there is no sense nor consistency in the prophecies of Isaiah. When he says, "Zion shall be ploughed as a field," you understand that to mean literal Zion, which was literally ploughed up by the ploughshares of the Romans. When it says, "The temple shall be cast down, and utterly destroyed, and not one stone left upon another," you understand that to be literal. Why not understand the other passages literally also? In Jeremiah iii. 17, we read: "They shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord." In Zechariah xiv. 9: "The Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." In Ezekiel xliii. 7: "Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile." I accept these words literally. If it can be proved to me that they must be taken figuratively, I am ready to acquiesce; but I have read all that has been said upon both sides, and I take these words as a literal promise: "The place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile." In the New Testament there are allusions that seem to denote a literal fulfilment of these promises. For instance, in Luke i. 32, speaking of the Saviour: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Again, in Acts i. 6: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" What did Jesus



answer? Did he say, Your expectation of a temporal, material, and terrestrial kingdom is a Jewish fable, and a Rabbinical dream, and you must not entertain such a notion? Not at all; he accepted it as a real question, and as an allusion to a real fact; but merely added: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons." They said: "Wilt thou *at this time* restore the kingdom?" He did not say, There will be no such thing restored unto Israel; but, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Then mark the Saviour's words in Matthew xxiii. 38: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." In Luke xxi. 24 we read: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" and of course when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled Jerusalem shall cease to be trodden under foot, shall be rebuilt, reconsecrated, and become again the beauty and the joy of the earth. And it is astonishing when you read the Bible how much is associated with this restoration of the Jews. In the Epistle to the Romans the Apostle Paul arguing says: "If the fall of the Jews be the riches of the world;" that is, if the kingdom being taken from them has been followed by that kingdom being given to us; "and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles" — now mark how he argues — "how much more their fulness?" He says, if we got good from their dispersion; if we reaped a blessing from their punishment, how vast the blessing, how incalculable the riches that the Gentiles shall reap from the restoration and return of the Jews? And again, argues the Apostle: "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the



world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead ? ”

If it should be answered, what profit is it to explain or to allude to these things, I answer, all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Depend upon it God knows and knew what was best for us to read, to learn, and to understand ; and if he has covered so many pages of his own word with predictions of the restoration of his ancient people, like all Scripture, it is profitable for instruction and for correction in righteousness. And in the next place, God's prophecies about the Jews should lead us not only to pray for them, but to try to enlighten them. I do not believe that the Jews will be converted till the very close of this economy ; but I believe that from the days of Paul, who was a Jew ; from the days of our blessed Lord, for he was also a Jew ; from the days of the Apostles to the present day, every year there have been two, twenty, and occasionally hundreds brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel of Christ. During the recent outpouring of the Spirit of God in America more Jews have rejoined the Christian church than for two hundred years before. There are at this moment more of the children of Israel in Jerusalem than there have been for eighteen hundred years.

The most accomplished professors in the universities of Europe are converted Jews ; the great Neander is a converted Jew ; and some of the most learned, elaborate, and noble expositions of the books of Scripture have been the productions of regenerated and converted Jews. But while we do believe that the whole nation will be restored, we also believe that they will be indrawn in increasing numbers as the time draws near who will acknowledge Christ as the Messiah. I have had a great many conver-

sations with Jews ; and some I have met with, I have been astonished to see the increasing fervor and piety beginning to dawn in their hearts. I remember conversing with one whose name is exceedingly known, and whose name is the very representative of wealth, and riches, and influence amid the nations of the earth. I sat next to that lady at dinner at a friend's house, and I asked her if she still cherished the hope of the Messiah ? She said that every true Jew did so, and they looked for him and longed for his return. It struck me upon the whole that there was more real piety in that Jewess than in many a loud professor of the Gospel of Christ. And who can say that they may not, amid all their ignorance, error, and misapprehension, catch a glimpse of that Messiah for whom they are looking as a returning conqueror, and see in the 53d of Isaiah the crucified as the ground of their acceptance and happiness before God ? I think the Jewish mind is vastly advanced within the last five and twenty years ; that they are ripening for a great change ; for some of them positively say that if the Messiah do not come speedily they will either turn Christians or atheists — that they cannot remain any longer as they are. The great bulk of them I admit are nothing at all ; but alas ! great numbers of baptized men are nothing at all. I have no doubt that the mass of the Jews feel no interest in the subject, and I fear multitudes of Christians are in the same plight. But if you take the best of them, you will find a spirit of inquiry, or a spirit of anxiety ; a sort of suspicion that something has gone wrong ; a sort of fear that the prophecies either are fulfilled or will not be fulfilled at all. And at such a crisis it seems the duty of the Christian church to do everything it can to enlighten them. The order of missionary exertion is to the Jew

first, and then to the Gentile. When our Saviour gave his commission he said: "Go and preach the Gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." And I believe, therefore, the Christian church that overlooks the Jews in its missionary sympathies will not be blessed in its exertions among the Gentiles.

Now if these things be so, we pray for the peace of Jerusalem. I take the words literally: "They shall prosper that love thee; for my friends and my brethren's sake I will say, Peace be within thee!" and we will pray that the day may come speedily when the glory of Jerusalem shall break forth upon the right hand and upon the left; and God's ancient people shall return; and the whole earth shall shine in the glory that dwelt between the cherubim; and all things shall be made new; and Christ and Christian, the new name, shall be all and in all.

## LECTURE IX.

### FUTURE PRIVILEGES AND JOYS.

THE elements of the world as it will be are in most prophetic pictures of its glory the counterparts of the present inheritance of sin and sorrow. The future is the reversal of every calamity sin has dragged into the present.

“For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem : thou shalt weep no more : he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry : when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers : and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.”— *Isaiah xxx.* 19—21.

THIS short passage in Isaiah is an epitome of a corresponding magnificent passage in the Apocalypse. It was the spring, descriptive of a glorious future, out of which Israel drank — the same spring that is open to us more fully, more widely : so that we have privileges and prospects that they, because of their imperfection and infirmity, were not able to cherish or to entertain.

It is here first of all declared of the people of God: "They shall dwell in Zion." "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, the city of the living God," that is to say, the central capital of the earth, when it shall be rebuilt, where the glory between the cherubim shall never be quenched — where shall swell upward an everlasting anthem, an unwearied hallelujah, the holy Psalmist's strain on the restored people's lips, without discord, suspension, or end.

But the people shall not only dwell in Zion, we are told, but also at Jerusalem. It is the belief of the soberest interpreters of prophecy that Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, that the picture in the 21st chapter of the Apocalypse is so minute, and if I may use an architectural phrase, the specifications are so exact, that no interpretation seems tenable that reduces it to metaphor, and supposes that it is the mere figurative portrait of a glory that will not be limited by material and earthly lineaments. It seems to me that this arises in a great degree from a notion that has taken possession of the minds of many, that all materialism, to use the phrase of the eloquent Dr. Chalmers, is intrinsically and incurably depraved and corrupt. In Dr. Chalmers' sermon, entitled "The New Heavens and the New Earth," we find the most eloquent and graphic portrait of the new heavens and the new earth, and we observe how often he repeats that the very essence and drift of the Christian economy is not to abolish matter, but to regenerate matter; not to destroy the world, but to disinfect the world; and that what he calls the "grossness of materialism" is not necessarily inseparable from the grossness of sin; and that the future will be, not, as he expresses it, some airy, transcendental place, of which we have no definite notion whatever, and which is the only hope of thousands, but a regenerated earth, a

repurified atmosphere, a reconsecrated heavens, and over it a glory, and settled upon it a splendor, and pervading it all a beauty, a blessedness and a repose, moral, intellectual and physical, of which we can have but dim and obscure conceptions in this condition of ours. The constant hope from Genesis to Revelation of all that have gone before us is — for what? A city. Abraham looked for a city that hath foundations. What foundations? Every manner of precious stone, whose maker and whose builder is God, enters into the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven, adorned like a bride prepared for the bridegroom. How comes it that throughout the New Testament we are constantly told to hope for a city? Christians are told that they are citizens of no mean city, and the Apocalypse tells us of a city that cometh down from heaven, the dimensions of which are given, the constituent glories of which are laid out, and to which all that God made shall be a contribution, and from which all that Satan corrupted shall be expelled for ever and for evermore. It is said to consist of twelve manner of precious stones, and as if to show that figurative interpretation is impossible, these twelve precious stones are named every one of them. The two most beautiful things in this world that sin has spared are the bright flowers of June and the precious stones in the earth. Ever as I gather a flower, and look at it, and study it, I find an apocalypse of beauty and loving-kindness in it. So I take a diamond, a precious stone, and feel that it is a sort of permanent and everlasting flower, having all the beauty of the blossom without its evanescence and decay. These precious stones seem to me sometimes as if they were the exploded and shattered fragments of some terrible convulsion. And it looks as if God will collect and reunite



them, and show that his own grand idea lost in Paradise that was, shall yet be recovered in the world as it will be, and that the devil shall not be able to take one stone, one flower, one living thing, of which he shall be able to say: "This is my trophy, and this is to be the glory of my success." Such then is the portrait of that future to which all past ages will contribute.

Then we read in this beautiful passage: "Thou shalt weep no more," translated into the Apocalyptic language — "He will wipe out every tear from all eyes," or as it is expressed in other passages: "The voice of weeping shall be no more heard in it." "The days of her mourning shall be ended." "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away;" or as it is afterwards expressed in the Apocalypse: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away;" that is to say, there shall be no springs of sorrow in the heart to start the tear in the eye. What is a tear? It is one of the characteristic marks of the greatness and the sin of our race. The brutes do not weep. It is evidence of the grandeur of man's nature that he weeps. It is the evidence that something has gone wrong with him that he must weep; but in that state all the sources and the springs of tears shall be extinguished and dried up. There shall be no law in our fallen nature warring against the law of our spirit, no shadow shall darken the mind with its wing, no storm shall beat upon the heart, no fever shall rack the frame, no disappointment vex, no calamity annoy; the very fountains of tears shall be dried up,

and tears shall be impossible, unless there shall fall that strange tear, the tear that springs from excess of joy. There shall be no weeping then. There will be no bereavements, no losses, no Rachels weeping for their children, and who will not be comforted. There shall be no green sod in which you shall have a freehold. There will be no graves in which you will feel an interest; but death — that death that separates the protégé from his patron, the child from his parent, the friend from his friend — shall for ever disappear, like a mist before the rising sunshine, and there shall be no more weeping. No afflictions shall travel, like clouds, across that sunny sky. Lines of glory shall supersede the lines and traces of suffering and of sorrow, and all shall be happy because all shall be holy. “Thou shalt weep no more.”

Then it is beautifully predicted, as a feature in this high and happy state, that “he will be very gracious to thee at the voice of thy crying.” I have sometimes ventured to say, what perhaps was scarcely correct, that in the future rest, or millennial state, there will be no prayer. Perhaps that is not true. The very essence of creature-ship is dependence. The very essence of a limited creature is the necessity of ceaseless supply. But the prayer then will not be the agonised cry of the present. It will be want no sooner felt than filled; it will be conscious want and instant supply, rapid and inseparable as sound and its echo, as cause and its effect. When we pray here we often know not what to pray for as we ought. There we shall know what to pray for. It is there promised that “it shall come to pass that before they call” — what a thought is that! — “before they call, I will answer; and whilst they are yet speaking, I will hear.” What a startling truth! It is only paralleled by that

beautiful passage, where Jesus tells Peter what he tells every Christian: "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have anticipated him, I have prepared for the assault, for I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Christ had prayed for Peter's safety before Peter's accuser had asked for liberty to attack him. God will answer our prayers before we present them. And that suggests a thought which is a great spring of happiness now, that God hears your prayers before you speak them. We all know how yearnings rise from our hearts like bubbles from the depths of the deep sea, that we cannot find language to define, and that we ourselves imperfectly apprehend. What are these? These are the unspoken prayers of human hearts; and the unspoken prayers of human hearts are heard by the prayer-hearing God; and before you have presented your desire in words, God has sent down an answer in facts exceeding abundantly above all that you can ask or desire. The Lord then "will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee."

"Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction." That is descriptive not of the future, but of the present. He says: "You shall dwell in Zion; he will be gracious; though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction" now; that is, at this moment; "yet shall not thy teachers be removed." We have therefore the description of the present lot, "the bread of adversity and the water of affliction." That tribulation, that great one, is the summary and the consummation of all the crimes and the troubles through which humanity has passed in its voyage to the haven of eternal joy.

It is the experience of us all that in some shape at

some time troubles beset us. We are all apt to think that when a special trouble is on us, it is the sorest; and very often if we murmur, because of the present trouble, and fret, and say, "I could have borne any other trouble but this," God sends another and a worse, because he desires that you should have confidence in him. Man is born unto trouble now, we are told, as the sparks fly upwards. Not a sun that rises but reveals broken hearts and weeping eyes somewhere. Daily the music of glad halls is turned into mourning; and not a sun sets that does not close upon some new trouble, and introduce some new trial; and sleep, to which we flee as the great opiate of mankind, is the fallow of the mind, but it is not the healer of the heart. The sting in the heart with which you fall asleep is not extracted in soft and dewy sleep, nature's sweet restorer; it is felt with all its keenness on the morrow; and there are mourners that will not be comforted; there are eyes, of which it may be said, they are acquainted only with tears: there are griefs which no time can heal; there are hairs white, not by age, but by trouble; and there are brows furrowed, not by years, but by the anxieties, the griefs, and sorrows which have passed over them; and there are tables on which the bread of adversity is oftenest broken, and on which the water of affliction is oftenest placed. Such is mankind now.

Yet even of these troubles, the apostle tells us: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory." If we be, not wood hay, stubble, but precious stones, or gold, or silver, then afflictions only take off the oxides that the world's atmosphere has left upon us. If we be precious stones, we are so precious, that Christ will never cast us aside. The most precious stones, we know,

need the greatest labor to polish them. Those that God loves best the tools of polishing are most frequently and constantly upon. It is one of the marks of God's people that in some shape they come through great tribulation. Some of us may not have tasted it yet, but it will come ; and if we are spared the personal trouble that gnaws the heart, there is that great one, that storm which will test the ship, that hurricane that will concentrate all our thoughts, that sea of tempest in which are many reefs, and on which many will make everlasting shipwreck, but across which, if we be God's people, we shall be borne — not, like Noah's ark, to be left upon Ararat, whence to go down upon a world depopulated and dismantled, but we shall be introduced into that haven into which no trouble whatever can come, and on which no storm can beat.

It is a precious truth that the sharpest trial will be the shortest, and the severest the most profitable ; and we shall learn best the lesson, which it is easier to teach than to feel, that if I be a Christian, whatever happens to me, however disastrous, long, or poignant, there is not one drop of wrath in it, or one atom of vengeance, and there is "a needs be" for it, and a purpose of beneficence beyond it. It is, whatever be its aspect, a contribution to a great issue. It is God's preparing us for a nobler, a better, and a more glorious destiny. The Apostle Paul, who had been in all sorts of troubles, could speak of them in this way — "our light affliction." What in the world could induce the Apostle Paul to say "our light affliction?" He was in "perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren ;" he was in prison ; he was scourged ; he was reproached ; he was maltreated ;



in every shape that torture could be inflicted he had experience of it. What could tempt him to say "our light affliction?" The explanation is this. If you love an object it is wonderful how much you will risk, dare, and undergo in order to reach that object. The affection of love in a human heart makes the roughest road smooth, the steepest hill easy, the biting frosts, the beating winds, or the torrid heat to be all tolerable, because you are animated by that great passion that strengthens and nerves for the hardest service, and for certain victory. The Apostle Paul's love to his Saviour was so strong that he said what he felt, that the affliction he endured was light. So the patriarch, speaking of his love for Rachel, said that the seven years appeared but as a few days for the love that he bore her. How much more in the instance of Divine love! Divine love kindled in the human heart will think what others only dream of, speak what others only think, and triumph where others strive and fail.

"Yet shall not thy teachers be removed out of thy sight." What a beautiful thought is this — "Thy teachers shall not be removed out of thy sight!" They are often removed now. Where are the teachers of your infancy, your boyhood, and your youth? There spring up dreary and desolate feelings when one grows up to manhood, and looks back upon the scenes of his youth. Look back any who have attained to forty or fifty or sixty years of age — look back. The friends of your youth, the teachers of your first lessons, those with whom you spent so many sunny hours, those with whom you took sweet counsel together — where are they? Echo on earth only repeats your words. A voice from heaven comes down, like music from the sky, saying: "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord: yea, saith the Spirit, from hence-



forth they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." Our teachers we shall not be deprived of any more ; that is to say, there shall be no ignorance there to dissipate, no error striking its roots in our hearts to be dug up, no uncharitableness, no suspicion, no doubt, no difficulty ; for thine eyes shall see and thine ears shall hear thy teachers. At that bright day everything we see shall be a teacher. It was so in Paradise, and the reason it is not so now is that sin has stained the lesson book, and all but struck dumb the teacher ; but when sin shall have fled from God's renovated world, when imperfection shall be done away with, and perfection without limits, and love and life without end, shall be our experience, then God's mind shall be seen written on the stars in the sky, and his will shall be legible in the flowers on the earth. Every stream by its chimes as it rolls to the sea will be a teacher ; every wave as it breaks upon the shore will be a teacher ; the dewdrops, like jewels, shall reflect Christ's grand name ; the sea, like a bright mirror, shall throw up and fling back his glory ; every rose shall remind you of Sharon's rose ; every star, of the bright and morning star ; and all things in the height and all things in the depth, and the whole universe itself shall teach marvellous lessons. In the words of a poetess lately deceased, who has written true poetry, inspired often with the noblest sentiment —

" Christ will send us down the angels,  
And the whole earth and the skies  
Will be illumed by altar candles  
Lit for blessed mysteries;  
And a priest's hand through creation  
Waveth calm and consecration."

Or, in the words of an American poet —

“The ocean looketh up to heaven,  
As 'twere a living thing;  
The homage of its waves is given  
In ceaseless worshipping.

“They kneel upon the sloping sands,  
As bends the human knee,  
A beautiful and tireless band,  
The priesthood of the sea.

“The green earth sends its incense up  
From every mountain shrine,  
From every flower and dewy cup  
That greeteth the sunshine.

“The sky is as a temple arch,  
The blue and wavy air  
Is glorious with the spirit march  
Of messengers of prayer.

“The gentle moon, the kindling sun,  
The many stars are given  
As shrines to burn earth's incense on —  
The altar-fires of heaven.”

But human poetry cannot reach or overtake the magnificence of the spectacle of the world that will be. It has been left for the apocalyptic pen justly and truly to portray it; and only in that grand Apocalypse can we see what a glory will settle down upon our world when all things will be made new. What a radiant lesson book will this universe be, and what a blessed heaven is in reversion for those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth! The future and everlasting rest will not be spent in ceaselessly singing, or in ceaselessly reading the picture and comparing it with the original; but we shall grow in all kinds and in all degrees of knowledge. The telescope gives us now but a glimpse of the magnifi-

cence of that universe which we shall then see no more through a glass darkly. The mere outposts and sentinels of that brilliant army are all that even the telescope can overtake. The microscope shows us that even in a drop of water, on a blade of grass, on a young bud, on a tender root, are mysteries the most marvellous, and evidences of wisdom, skill, and beneficence the most untiring. In the world as it will be we shall be in a state where the microscope must be imperfection, where the telescope will be useless ; and when we shall see as we are seen into all heights and all depths, and penetrate all mysteries, and unravel all difficulties, I can really comprehend that there is in reserve for us a joy unspeakable and full of glory, when the glass through which we now see darkly and dimly shall be shattered, and we shall see as we are seen, and know even as we are known. Who does not wish for that noon of time, that brilliant close of the chequered universe, the fulfilment of this grand prophecy, the realization of this living and blessed hope, when there shall be no sin to vex, no disappointments to fret, no evil to intrude, no tears, no death, no crying, no pain, but when there shall be positively the glory of Deity, the presence of the Lamb — the reunion with all that we parted with on earth, whom we would have kept because we loved them, but whom God took because he loved them more — faces in the shadow of the grave shall emerge into the sunshine, voices now silent in death shall be heard in more musical reverberations, footsteps familiar in their fall as household words shall be heard again, and those we parted with, we wickedly said for ever, we shall then thankfully hail, the broken circle will be completed, and the missing links found, for all things are made new.

## LECTURE X.

### THE CURSE TURNED INTO BLESSING.

NEITHER earth, nor air, nor sky — neither man nor beast, nor bird, nor fish is as originally made. A great curse fell on all six thousand years ago. But there shall be

“ No more curse.”— *Revelation xxii. 3.*

THE primal curse is written in these words: “ Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, till thou return unto the ground: for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art,

and unto dust shalt thou return.”—Gen. iii. 16–19. On the descent of that curse the brutes of the field, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea underwent a total change, not of shape or plumage, perhaps, but of disposition. Is it possible to believe that the whole brute creation was originally constituted as we now find it? that creatures called into being by a benevolent God, whose were the resources of infinite wisdom, devoured each other in Paradise? that man’s eyes were originally meant to gaze on bloodshed, and witness the horrors of a battle-field; and his ears to hear, amid the melody of brooks and the music of winds, the cries of creation groaning in pain and seeking to be delivered? God made all peaceful and happy; sin altered their very nature, and modified, it is probable, even their physical organization. The predictions of the future paradise imply the disastrous change that passed upon everything connected with the first: “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox;” the curse shall be rolled away, the incubus of evil shall be withdrawn, and all things restored to their pristine perfection. It may here be asked, however, if it was reasonable or just to curse the animals because man had sinned? If God has recorded it as a fact, we may be perfectly satisfied it is alike reasonable and just. But the reason seems plain: the creatures were made for man, to beautify his home, to minister to his wants, and to obey his royal behests. Man’s sin spread its eclipse over all the earth, and turned the birds of the air, the beasts of the earth, and the fishes of the sea, into enemies, that fly from him in terror, or turn upon him in fury. The lord of creation fell, and all his vassals fell in him and with him.

In that part of the curse which especially relates to



man, the woman is first singled out as its subject; first in the transgression, she was sentenced to be first also in suffering. Her sorrow is described in Scripture as the keenest which human nature feels — a sorrow that brings her sometimes to the grave, and leaves only the motherless memento. The next punishment denounced upon the woman is her dependence on man, or the surrender of her individual freedom, in order to accomplish the ends of her existence upon earth. The whole history of our race is the painful evidence of this. This subjection is lightened where Christianity prevails by compensatory glories; and her loss of liberty is forgotten in her inheritance of love. Inferior as she is by position, she rises to an equality by grace. But this blessing is not of nature, but from the Gospel; and woman, in Christian lands, does not present the complete fulfilment of the curse denounced originally upon her. In heathen lands the curse is visibly struck into her experience; for there she has neither the dignity of woman, nor the protection of the slave, nor the joys of the mother. Woman remains in India just as she was left at the fall — the inheritor of a corroding and consuming curse, which cleaves to her like life itself.

The curse fell in scathing fury upon the ground. It was created beautiful, prolific, and good; but when sin fell upon it, like a blot radiating from the centre to the circumference, the curse of barrenness followed. It is now sown thick with graves. The cypress grows where the tree of life stood; and melancholy requiems have taken the place of its primeval jubilee. The rose that Eve carried forth from Paradise withered in her hand, and turned to corruption; and the sun that rose so beautifully that morning, set in storms. The rolling thunder and the rending lightnings still leave wrecks behind them. The

yawning earth occasionally gulps down great capitals, and buries a mighty population in a common tomb. The roaring flood sweeps away corn, and cattle, and villages, and all man's husbandry to the main; and the unsatiated sea still buries proud navies in its waters, and roars for yet nobler victims; and hailstones descend like destroying angels from the sky, and blast the choicest fruits of the soil; and famine, and pestilence, and plague still indicate their common parentage — the curse. These groans of creation are the echoes of the judgment pronounced in Eden — these seared and blasted deserts are made so by the sirocco of sin; the infected house proves the presence of the infected tenant; disorders in the estate give evidence of moral disease in the owner of it. The world lost its beauty when man parted with his innocence: thorns sprang from sin-seeds, and earth grew barren because her lord had become guilty; and we have only to see disorder in the elements, to be satisfied that there is a difference between man and God. Earth become rebellious, selfish, avaricious, must be ploughed and torn by instruments of iron, and watered with the tears of man's eyes, and fertilized with the sweat of man's brow, before it will yield him any sustenance. Of itself it produces only weeds that are worthless, or fruits that are poisonous and always insects that eat up what we sow — as if nature were indignant with man, and desirous of avenging her wrongs upon him. Man rose against God, and that instant all creation rose against man. And "we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." See the slave in the mine, the husbandman in the fields, the sailor on the ocean, the soldier in battle, and the laborer in the workshop, in order to perceive the rebound of man's sin in paradise; and where there is less

physical, there is more mental wear and tear ; and where wealth is the greatest, it is only the glittering mask that conceals the agony within. The curse cleaves close to the human heart — corrosive, consuming, defying all antidote but one ; sometimes covered, sometimes gilded, but never extirpated, except in the experience of the child of God.

“ In the day thou eatest thou shalt die ; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,” is a no less obvious result of the primeval curse. Disease, consumption, fever, grey hairs, and death, constitute the long dark procession from the gates of Paradise, and disappear only in the receptacle which none can stave off — the grave. Infants and aged patriarchs die ; kings on their thrones, and judges on their tribunals, die ; and no sanctuary or altar-horns can protect from the stroke of death. No beauty or birth can bid away the king of terrors ; the Methuselah of a thousand years, and the infant of yesterday must die. Adam bore patiently the calamities of the fall till he saw for the first time death, in the cold limbs and the pallid face of Abel. Death is the image of sin, the portrait of our guilt, the wages of iniquity.

Exile from Eden was also a portion of the primeval curse, for it is written, “ He drove out the man.” Eden lost its attractions, for man had lost his susceptibility of them. The tree of knowledge waved its branches from afar, but it was as the memorial only of our crime. The tree of life lost not its magnificence and glory, but man had no access to it. He who lived the one day beneath the wings of angels, wandered the next day under a roofless world ; beginning that distance from God, the utmost aphelion of which is hell.— The curse fell on man’s intellect also. Once his soaring thoughts reached the pres-

ence of the seraphim; and ever as they rose in the heights, or descended in the depths, he saw in the one the image, and in the other the footprints of Deity.

This great intellect is now darkened, distorted, enfeebled, and its powers frequently lavished on ignoble and unworthy objects. Has not genius frequently aided the assassin, and become the ally of the robber? Has it not carried ambition to thrones through a sea of blood, and avarice to fortune through all kinds of tortuous and wicked courses; manifesting itself as the drudge of sin, the hack of Satan, the pioneer of accumulated evil? In poetry, which ought to sing only the good, the beautiful, the true, how much of evil has genius manifested? If Milton has celebrated in song the glories and also the exiles of Eden, has not Shelley gilded with its charms what he had depravity to imagine—souls without hope and a world without God? If Cowper has covered with new beauty domestic life and real religion and Christian worth, has not Byron withered with infidel sarcasm whatever of divine holiness or human happiness he was permitted to touch?

Nor has science escaped the universal curse. Has not geology emerged at times from its subterranean researches, and shouted in triumph, “No God?” Has not astronomy risen on outspread pinion, and, after visiting suns and systems, alighted on the earth, and told mankind that in the vestiges of creation there is no vestige of a Creator? Have not Volney and others visited the east and the west, and opened the sarcophagi of ancient kings, and explored pyramidal chambers, and traced the Nile, and crossed the Jordan, and sailed upon the sea of Galilee, and walked in Gethsemane, and stood on Ararat, Zion, and Calvary,—and denounced the everlasting Gospel as a

fable? Have not naturalists gazed upon the light of morn beautiful as an infant, and on the shadows of evening mellowed like age, and on the buds of spring, and on the falling leaves of autumn, and on the drifted snow, and on the driving showers, and alleged that they saw nothing higher than the balancing of the air, the motion of the earth, the evaporation of the waters?

But this curse shall be cast out. The vast universe shall yet glow with Deity; creation shall be seen to be the chamber of his presence, the dwelling-place of his power, the receptacle of his designs, the autograph of our Father; and astronomy, and literature, and geology, and chemistry, and poetry, shall hear with arrested ears and delighted hearts, the "Lord God walking in the garden" of creation "in the cool of the day." Isaiah lx. shall become actual: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes around about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee: the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto



thee : they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows ? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God : and to the holy one of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee : for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually ; they shall not be shut day nor night ; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish ; nay, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary ; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee ; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet ; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings : and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron : I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders ; but



thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteousness: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time."

The curse shall be lifted off man's heart. How great must be that depravity which renders the motives, hopes, and fears of eternity absolutely inefficacious till they are applied by God himself! It must be an all but infinite curse that needs an Omnipotent hand in order to remove it. Fallen man has worshipped the things he made — turned his very vices into gods; and architecture has raised a pantheon for their reception, and poets have sung their depravity as sublime heroism. What a concentration of the curse was there in that one man, Voltaire! — a man to whom the love of man and the fear of God were a nullity; whose joy consisted in tearing from the human heart its best hopes, and from the social system its only cement; who gloried only in wreck; whose favorite weapons were sarcasm and lies. Experience, in his case, confirms the Divine testimony: "The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Inspiration has asked and answered the question, "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even from your lusts that war in your members?" Lands intersected by a narrow path abhor each other.

Mountains interposed make enemies of nations, who had else, like kindred drops, been mingled into one.—The curse lies sore and heavy on man's body. We need not enumerate the diseases "that flesh is heir to," or prove that these are the offspring of the curse. This body is now as often a hindrance as it is a help to the soul. Often is it a strong obstruction to communion with God; and by all of us it is felt to be the battle-field between heaven and hell.

The curse shall be lifted away from all places on which it now lies: it shall be no more on Ebal, nor on Jerusalem, nor upon Sinai. No Balak shall say, "Come, curse me Israel;" it shall no more be said, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be anathema;" nor, "If any man preach any other Gospel, let him be anathema." The offence shall be impossible, and the curse unknown! It shall no more be written, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." Deut. xxviii. 16–19, shall be repealed; it shall no more be said, "Depart, ye cursed," for there shall be no more utter destruction. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, "Holiness unto the Lord;" and in that day there shall be "no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord."

Creation, at that day, shall lay aside the ashen garments which it has worn for many thousand years, and put on its Easter robes. It, too, has its regeneration: like some nurse of a royal child which it has reared, she shall be remembered and raised to dignity when he mounts his throne. The first Adam lost the garden, and inherited the wilderness. The second Adam took up the battle just where the first left off; and in the wilderness fought the foe, and won back Paradise for man; and a foretaste

and earnest of final victory was presented in his wonderful works. Each miracle was a germ of Paradise, and triumphant evidence that all creation was soft and pliant in his hand. Each miracle was a foretoken, and forelight, and firstfruit of the restoration of all creation. When he healed the sick, that cure was a forelight of the sickless state. When he raised the dead, that act was a foretoken of the first resurrection. When he calmed the storm, there was seen a firstfruit of that everlasting calm which his priestly hand shall wave over all creation. That pierced hand of the Babe of Bethlehem shall seize the sceptre of the universe, and lay its touch upon the ocean's waves; and his word, like a resistless spell, shall go down to nature's depths and up to nature's heights, and hallow all space to be a temple of Deity. Earth shall become a glorious Gerizim; there shall no more be in it the common or the unclean; there shall be no more curse, for Christ was made a curse for us.

## XI.

### THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS.

THE theme of the noble army of martyrs is so rich in hope and glory that I revert to it, in order more fully to depict it.

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”—*Revelation, vii. 9, 10.*

THE idea embodied in the seventh chapter of the Apocalypse is this, that the great mass of the visible church had become corrupt and apostate, and that out of the midst of it God was selecting the millennial church, sealing every member, and fitting him for glory, honor, and for immortality. If there be one lesson more striking than another taught in this blessed book it is that the visible church, stretching from the days of Augustine down to the days of Martin Luther, was not the true church, but the manifest apostacy ; and that the true succession, the real apostolical succession, was not through priests and prelates in the Roman Catholic apostacy, but in true Christians, often

hated, often proscribed and persecuted, but never extinguished; stretching from Augustine through the Waldenses in the west, the Paulicians in the east, till it merged in Luther and the Protestants of the Reformation, and spreads over the world at this day, increased and still increasing. If any one will read the most interesting sketch of Merle d'Aubigné, or will have recourse to authentic documents accesible to the learned, he will find that those prelates who were princes, whose churches were cathedrals, whose worship was pomp, and splendor, and ceremonial, were not the true ambassadors of Christ; that they preached a gospel which was another gospel, not the Gospel of Christ Jesus; and that then and there, and during that eclipse, the true church, the woman in the 12th chapter, had fled into the wilderness — that the witnesses were buried in the dens, and caves, and sequestered nooks and deserts of the earth; and that then, as now, the world knew them not.

It is a pity that any should pretend to trace the apostolical succession through prelates that carried the crozier in one hand and the sword in the other, through priests that preached no Gospel, and loved no Saviour, and opened no Bible, instead of tracing it through those meek but often martyred men who, when religion was a shame and the profession of it was death, still held fast amid the Cottian Alps, and have left their bones bleaching amid the Alpine mountains' cold. These were the true Christians, these the true succession; and very beautifully are they called in this very book "the witnesses." What is the original word for martyr? "Martyr," in the Greek, means simply "one that witnesses." What is the meaning of the word Protestant? *Protestor*; "I protest;" *pro*, "for;" *testis*, "a witness." The witnesses, there-



fore, described in the Apocalypse are the Protestants, the martyrs; those that testified from the commencement onward to the close; and when at the Diet of Spire the name *Protestantes*, witnesses, was assumed by Luther and those who were associated with him, unconsciously they vindicated in that name their inheritance of the descent of the witnesses of old, and stamped themselves that true and legitimate succession the commencement of which was at the cross on Calvary, the coronal of which is a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Whilst the great apostacy gathered bulk there took place a symbolic sealing, marking off the true church in the midst of the apostate church. I do not deny that there were Christians in the Church of Rome; I believe at this moment there are true Christians in it. We have evidence irresistible that under the worst of systems there may be good men; not to teach us that the system is to be lightly spoken of, but to show us how mighty is that grace which can burst through the eclipse of the system, and touch and transform into the likeness of Christ them that are in it but not of it. The truth is there are Papists in the Protestant Church, and there are Protestants in the Popish Church. It is not connection with a church that makes a Christian, but connection with Christ Jesus. In the earliest records of the middle ages we find many a one that struggled hard against a system of apostacy that did not like to abandon what he thought the true church, and lived and died in it a martyr. The biography of Martin Boos proves this. He was a priest of the Church of Rome, he ministered at her altars to his death, and yet from first to last he was a holy, spiritually-minded, and devoted Christian. He was persecuted, he was threatened, he was maligned, he was spoiled of all that he

had, just because he held that the mass was a memorial, not a sacrifice; because he held that the Virgin Mary was not to be worshipped. To uphold the consistency of his position is one thing, but that there was a true Christian struggling against that system is, I think, the conclusion that every fair and impartial judgment must come to. Who can doubt, on the other hand, that Pascal was a Christian? yet he lived in the Church of Rome, proscribed by it as a Jansenist. Who, again, can doubt that Quesnel, that wrote the propositions condemned in the Bull *Unigenitus* by Clement in 1713, was a Christian? All that he said, and felt, and did, proves that he was. But still these are not proofs that the system is good. People say, "How uncharitable to condemn the Church of Rome! Was there not a Quesnel in it? Was there not a Pascal? Was there not the celebrated Archbishop Fénelon in it? How can you attack such a system?" I answer, a single beautiful and fragrant flower upon the Alps that the frosts have not nipped and the cold winds have not blasted does not prove that the Alps are a genial and prolific soil; it only proves how vegetable life can resist the most disastrous of circumstances, and bud and blossom notwithstanding. So these Christians in the Church of Rome are not evidences that the soil of the system is good; but how mighty is that grace which in the most unpropitious of circumstances can transform, and sanctify, and develop true Christians notwithstanding!

After this symbolic sealing of the saints of God in the midst of that apostacy to which this chapter especially alludes, there is a description of the saints in glory, from the 9th verse onward to the close, the most poetical, the most beautiful, ever conceived by human mind or recorded in human speech. First it tells us that the saved are "a

great multitude." Happy thought! not a handful, as the bigot says — not all men, as the latitudinarian says — but a great multitude, and so great that no man could number it. I know the objections made. First, it is said, we see that the majority of the human race are not Christians: I think that is evident enough. Take the whole mass of professing Christendom, and I doubt if it constitutes a fourth of the human family. Then divide and disintegrate that mass, and you find two-thirds of it are involved in dense Russian or Romish superstition. Take, again, the remaining third professing to be Protestants, and how many are in Israel who are not of Israel; and the conclusion forced upon one is, that many are called, but that few are chosen — that broad is the way that leads to ruin, and many there be that beat it. You ask, how then can we account for a great multitude? I believe that that multitude will be the overwhelming majority of the human race. First, in the last ages of the church all will be Christian without exception; secondly, as already shown, in every age of the church all infants dying in infancy, whether baptized or unbaptized, whether their mothers were Christians, Mahometans, or Hindoos, are admitted to, and grow to perfection in, glory. And if it be true that half the human family die before ten years of age, we can see in every generation a great majority on the whole passing into everlasting life. But whatever be the *data* or the elements of the conclusion, the fact of the result is evident when it says: "A great multitude that no man can number of all nations" — not Christian nations only — "and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood" — the attitude of dignity — "before the throne" — the place of greatness — "clothed with white robes" — the righteousness which is their title — "with palms in

their hands"—the marks and symbols of victory—"and they praised God, saying, Salvation unto our God that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." This seems to prove that there are no Unitarians there. I do not say the Unitarian must in every individual case be lost; I only say that this transient gleam of the happiness of the blessed—this anthem peal, borne in its echoes from heaven to earth—shows that the great multitude composed of all nations, worshipped and adored the Lamb, that is, Jesus Christ, as the object of their worship; therefore God over all, blessed for evermore. And, secondly, it would seem to me, while not asserting that all Roman Catholics are lost—God forbid!—that there are no Roman Catholics in heaven. Not one note of a song to the Virgin is heard, not even the mention of her name; but the anthem peal swells from the mighty multitude undivided, "Unto God, even the Lamb that sits upon the throne." Would it not be better if Roman Catholics worshipped upon earth him only who alone is worshipped in heaven? Would it not be better if Unitarians worshipped him now who is as a matter of fact adored and worshipped as God in heaven?

There is the symbolic statement of a question: "What are these in white robes?" Some one was startled by the sight. Evidently they were not natives, plainly they were emigrants and colonists; they had been translated there. A native of the place asks, "Who are these that are arrayed in white robes?" And one said, "How can you be ignorant of this? Surely thou knowest." And then he said, "But if you do not, let me explain to you; I will tell you who they are. These are they which came out of that great tribulation:" "through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." And this

is their right to be in heaven: "they have washed their robes and made them white." The Greek word does not signify innocence, but *purified*: "They have made them white in the blood of the Lamb." And then it adds, "Therefore on this account are they before the throne." What is their title to stand there? Not anything they have done, but this, that their robes are white through the blood of the Lamb: "And they serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." *Shechinah* is derived from a Hebrew verb, *shakan*, which means "to dwell." The expression, "He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them," if written in Hebrew would be, "He that sitteth upon the throne shall be the *shechinah* in the midst of them;" connecting the glory that burned between the cherubim with the glory that burns on the new earth, the symbol of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

To show that it is the symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ, "The Word," says John in his Gospel, "was made flesh and dwelt among us." If that had been written in the Hebrew it would have been, "The Word was made flesh and was the *shechinah* in the midst of us." Now says John in the Apocalypse, that same Word shall be the *shechinah* in the Millennial Rest. Those that are there "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." That expression, "wipe away," is literally, "wipe out all tears from all eyes." "And God shall weep out all tears or streams of sorrow that flow from all eyes that have been



fountains for such streams through life." In other words, He will not only extinguish tears, but dry up the very spring and fountain of tears, that the happiness of the redeemed in heaven may be perfect and without ceasing. It is a blessed hope that the future will be filled by a great multitude, while they that are not there will be entirely self-excluded. In that great multitude will be patriarchs of ancient days, prophets, saints, apostles, martyrs, evangelists, and ancient Christians, Abraham, Isaac, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John, and Augustine, and Vigilantius, and Peter Waldo, and Luther, and Calvin, and innumerable others, clad in white robes, with palms in their hands, singing, "Salvation to our God." Some have come from the sands of distant deserts,—some from the depths of the unsounded ocean,—some from beneath battle-sods. The icebergs in the polar realms will rend asunder when the trumpet sounds, and the dead that are there shall come forth. They too that expired in the fires of martyrdom are there; thousands who have suffered and been silent—the martyrdom the heart feels, but the trumpet does not roll abroad in multiplying echoes—will also be there. Not one blossom will be withered, not one sheaf will be lost, not one gem will be wanting. The complete number of the sons of God, the heirs of glory, will constitute the church in heaven—the mighty multitude that no man can number. Not one trace of disease, or of the smoke of the fires; not one channel for a tear is left, nor a memorial of tears that rolled in it, will be there. All the marks of corruption have disappeared; and innumerable as the stars in the sky, countless as the sands on the sea-shore, brilliant as the morning dews in an unsetting sun, beyond the limits of sect, unscathed by the distinctions of party, will be a great multitude on a

regenerated earth that have no head but Christ, no name but Christian, and no song but salvation to our God and to the Lamb that sitteth on the throne.

The Jew restricted the Gospel to his own ; he believed that beyond the plains of Palestine no glad sound could ring, no offer of mercy could be made. He thought religion was inspired for him, and for nobody in the world besides ; the limits that God laid down he made tighter, the distinctions that God recognized he wrote deeper. But now this multitude is composed not of Jews, but of all nations ; the monopoly of the Jew has become the heritage of all mankind. The national reservoir which was once so full in Jerusalem has now overflowed and become a mighty stream, and where handfuls once drank whole nations now slake their thirst. The Jewish is now Catholic ; the religion of the Hebrew has become the religion of humanity ; and this is the essential character of Christianity — it is a religion not for a *coterie* nor a sect, nor a church, nor a party ; and he that tries to limit it to his own is sure to lose half its life and power. What land has it not visited, what color and clime has it not touched and transformed ! Tongues have ceased, tribes have withered down to the roots. Priests have passed away without a word to declare that they once were ; temples, and *basilicas*, and cathedrals, and pyramids are in ruins ; but this divine Levite still walks the world, consecrating every spot it touches ; this angel with the everlasting Gospel still flies with a pinion, that neither faints under equatorial suns, nor is numbed amid polar snows, while his strength is renewed as he flies. The whole earth shall yet be covered with God's glory, and a mighty multitude shall stand on it before the throne, that no man can number.

But not only has the Jewish ceased in reference to Christianity, but families, whole families, have been introduced into it. "Of all nations," it is said, "and of all kindreds," that is families. Shem, Ham, and Japheth once met in the ark of Noah; they meet in their descendants in the ark of everlasting happiness, and holiness, and peace. The African is just as welcome to the Gospel, ay, and as fit for it, as the most polished and educated European. Nothing can be more monstrous than the notion that the African is a sort of intermediate being between the human animal, as they talk, and the brutes that perish; and that the negro is not capable of the cultivation, the elevation, that we have. No doubt the bodies of the human race vary, just as everything else does. The houses in this great city differ very much from each other: one is built of stone, and all the wealth of a bank is lavished upon its ornament; another is a very humble cottage; but in the humblest cottage and in the noblest hall the inhabitant is a man. So the body of the European may be more beautifully chiselled, the symmetry more exquisite, its adaptation to the inhabitant more complete; but in the humblest specimen of physical organization in Africa, and in the highest specimen of physical organization in England, there subsists living and latent an immortal and a glorious soul. The outer shrine may differ; the inner glory is the same. The Gospel is addressed to all; and therefore we read that in the group that composes the church in glory are all kindreds; Shem, and Ham, and Japheth; the patriarch from his tent, the Jew from his temple, the Greek and the Roman from their civilization, the Arab from his desert, the Cossack from his steppes — all, of every kindred, each retaining his original idiosyncrasy, but all elevated, inspired, ennobled by the grace

of God and the influence of the resurrection-morn. The church of the future will not be composed wholly of white people, nor wholly of black people; I do not believe that Adam was either the white of England or the black of Africa; probably he was more like the Arab, or the Syrian. But whatever be the perfection of the human frame it will be there; and when the resurrection power passes on us there will not be new bodies given to us, but the old bodies inspired, elevated, reconstructed, endued with immortality and lighted up with glory. And not only will there be all kindreds in this group, but there will also be all tongues; "a great multitude of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues."

In that future there will not be one universal tongue. This is the crotchet of Rome, not the revelation of God. Language is the vehicle of thought, the mere clothing of things; and the variety of speech, instead of being a blemish, seems really the greatest possible beauty. All flowers have the same essential constituent elements; but how different is the camellia from the rose, the daisy, or the lily! God has made infinite variety of development upon the ground of an essential and an all-pervading unity. In the same manner, the highest music is not composed of one part, but of four. The purest light is composed of three or of seven colors; and thus the harmony of heaven may not be mere unison, or each inmate the mere copy of another; there may be infinite variety, and yet an all-pervading unity. But was not the division of tongues the result of sin? It was; the division of tongues at Babel was the effect of sin. The result of the most elaborate investigation into the ethnology of our world and the structure of its tongues by Germans, French, and English, yields the unanimous conclusion

that all languages indicate affinities enough to prove a common source, but variety enough to imply a grand disruption at some period of their history. In other words, the investigations of science have reached the assertion of the word of God, that the tower of Babel is not a myth, a romance, but a simple and a truthful history.

But it is objected, if the division of tongues arose from sin, would it not follow that what sin has done shall be annihilated, and what was once spoken in Paradise shall be the language of heaven? I answer, the highest triumph of grace is not in bringing back what was originally in Paradise, but in taking what sin has done and turning that to the greater glory of God, and the richer manifestation of his goodness. So that while the different tongues that now exist may spring from sin, grace can take the variety that sin has made, and instead of allowing that variety to subserve the purpose of Satan, may make it subserve only more resplendently the purpose and beneficence of God. As a proof of this, Pentecost was not the selection of one tongue for all nations, but the consecration of each man's own tongue to convey the wonderful works and ways of God. Thus we expect in that group will be all tongues, purified and disinfected from the taint of their passage through this world, and made together to express the glory and to be the vehicles of the praise of him who made all things by his power, redeemed all in his mercy, and out of the intensest evil has educes everlasting and glorious good.

Such is the constituent character of the group. They stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb. This shows the change that has passed upon them. They are standing in the immediate presence of God. When John saw the glory of God, we are told in the Apocalypse, "I



fell down at his feet as dead." In this earthly tenement he was not able to endure the intense glory of God. But these not only endure but enjoy it. It is the very sight they love, it is the very air they breathe; they are like him because they see him as he is; the promise being, "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." They are evidences of the fulfilment of Christ's prayer: "I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may be where I am, that they may behold my glory." They stand before the throne in that light which no man can now see or has seen.

Their attitude is remarkable; they *stand*. The word *stand* is used in the Psalms to denote acceptance. "The wicked shall not stand in the judgment." "If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who could stand?" But this group have ceased to feel that impossibility; "they stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb." All their sins are blotted out, all their transgressions put away, their hearts are sanctified, their nature pure; and they can now bear to be seen in that intense light which reveals specks in the sun, flaws in the angels, faults in all. And they stand too, we are told, before the Lamb. This is to remind us that it is through him they got there, and that it is by him they stand there; — he is the centre to which as *radii* they converge; his name, his praise, what he gained by his cross and what he does by his crown, constituting the burden of the richest songs, the study of their inquiring minds, and the admiration of all that are there. Or perhaps the word *stand* may denote, they are ready to execute his will, prepared constantly to do service to him; as servants stand in the presence of a king to go forth and execute his behests in every province of his wide-spread empire.

These are not the robes of primal innocence; they were lost in Paradise, and are now mingled with the corruption of all things. Not the robes that Adam bequeathed to them after he fell; for they are unfit for us to appear in before the presence of God and of the Lamb. Then what robes are these? Robes they have washed, in the language of the same chapter, and made white in the blood of the Lamb. It is their outer aspect, and therefore the declaration of their only title of admission into heaven. Christ took our tainted robes upon him and bequeathed his spotless robes to us. He was made our sin that we might never taste its bitter penalty; we are made his righteousness that we may for ever enjoy his everlasting glory. In Christ is our title, justified by him we have the ground of our acceptance. Those white robes are not their own, they are imputed; and they reflect for ever the glory of him that imputed them. This is the only title of admission; and, blessed be God! it is a title freely offered to all. The guest that went in without it was speechless; he had no apology, or excuse. Why? Because it was freely offered to him, just as it was offered to every guest that was there. And if any one appear at the judgment-seat, at the gates of glory, without the shining robe, the resplendent title, it will not be because God's decree excluded him, but because he refused to put it on, and thought his own raiment was good enough to wear in the presence of God.

But not only are they clad in white robes, but they have also palms in their hands. In the calendar of the Church of Rome is a day called Palm Sunday; and on this day accordingly palm-branches are carried in their cathedrals, and are duly blessed amid pomp and splendor in the presence of the people; that Church, ever true to

its character, holding fast the dead symbol, whilst the inner life of which it was the exponent is gone and perished for ever. But the palms held in the hands of this palm-bearing multitude are not insignificant and unsuggestive things, but full of meaning. A conqueror in ancient times was received on returning from the battle, carrying in his hand a palm-branch. The inscriptions on monuments prove this; the constant allusions to it in sacred and profane writers equally prove it; and the fact therefore that this group has each a palm in his hand denotes they are conquerors, and have passed successfully through all the perils and the trials of a protracted warfare. Here we are soldiers, our condition is that of warfare; but our hope is victory; the symbol of it is the palm in the hand of him that is clad with the white and the shining robe. In this world there is war. This is not the region of peace, it is not the realm of conquest, it is the season of battle, the fiercer that it is inner and not outer. There are wars more dreadful than those which time has witnessed — the war described in the New Testament is with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Far sterner battles have been waged in individual bosoms than ever have been fought and finished on historic battle-fields. Many a one who could lead his victorious troops to victory never learned, or rather never was able, to conquer himself. The greatest conqueror in the sight of heaven is not he whose name is registered in the annals, and inscribed on the monuments, of grateful nations, but he that conquers the evil that is within in the strength of Him who is offered to the poorest, and whose strength is equal to the wants of the weakest. What is this warfare, and what is its nature? It is a warfare with Satan. Many think Satan a figure of speech; and, alas!

they that think so have received instruction from the very Satan whose personality and existence they thus explain away. But there is no doubt that there is an archangel fallen, possessed of all the subtlety of the serpent, all the ferocity of the lion; a being so sunk and fallen, that our ruin is his only delight, our destruction his only trade; and the incidental gleams of joy that pass athwart his countenance or that electrify his spirit rise from the success he attains in ruining and destroying souls. I know not a more awful proof of Satan's power, than that he can penetrate the depths of the heart, speak to the conscience, persuade without words, enchain without iron links, and drag a captive at his chariot-wheels, the very man that boasts he is free, and never was the slave of any.

When we shall take our place in that shining group and gaze at the palm in our hand, the symbol of a warfare that has ceased, and the evidence of a conquest that has been won, we shall be so persuaded of Satan's power and Satan's might that we shall learn then, as we never learned before, that nothing but a Divine power within us could have made us conquerors, nothing but Almighty strength made perfect in our weakness could ever have brought us here. But there is another element that we have to war with, the world. Perhaps the world is not properly an enemy, but rather a weapon wielded and used in Satan's hand. It comes to you offering to-day a place, if you will only give up your principle; another day it offers you honor, if you will only resist that other thing called conscience; another time it offers you wealth, if you will only shrink from duty. The world's smiles are far more perilous than the world's hatred, persecution, and reproach; and never are we more deceived than when we

are the most pleased, and give the largest hospitality to the smiles, the promises, and the flatteries of the world. We all know that, so long as we have five senses, what gratifies them will have prodigious power with us. But has not God left much to gratify them within limits that are holy? It is only when these limits are exceeded that the world has gained the battle and that we have disastrously lost it. Another foe we have to encounter, if indeed a distinct foe it can be called, is sin; and the worst of it is that it is everywhere. Sin is in the head, in the heart, in the conscience, in the hand; it is in every nerve, and fibre, and muscle of our physical economy. And this sin, ever present, a lodger that we do not like, and that many dare not eject — a power that we submit to be led captive by oftener than we resist and endeavor to expel — the palm-bearing multitude have found not only expiated by a Saviour's blood, but extirpated from their hearts by a Saviour's Spirit; and the palm in the hand is the proof that they are fit for heaven, the white robe that they wear is the proof that they are entitled to heaven; and thus having the right to be there, and the qualification that makes their being there enjoyment, they constitute the great multitude that no man can number, the company of the redeemed out of every kindred, and people, and nation, and tongue, who have overcome through the blood of the Lamb, and are now before the throne, and serve him day and night without ceasing. Their battles are now over, their warfare is accomplished; they have fought the good fight, they have reached the prize; the battle-field is left far behind, the shield is needed no more; the sword is not beat into the ploughshare, but it is transmuted into the palm, and they neither learn nor love war any more.



The last feature in their character is that they sing, "Salvation unto our God and to the Lamb." Now if this be the model church, of which every church upon earth ought to be in some degree a copy, how truly evangelical is every *trait* in its character! how truly evangelical is the very song they sing! Not "salvation unto us," as if we had reached it by our own power; but "salvation unto our God and to the Lamb." When a church on earth speaks much of itself it is an ominous feature; when it speaks entirely of itself it is a thorough apostacy. This group in heaven say nothing of what they did; the burden of their song is, "Salvation unto our God and to the Lamb;" that is, his be all the glory, ours all the comfort. "Salvation unto our God," he only is the author of it; "and unto the Lamb," he only is the purchaser of it; and to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit alone be all the glory, the honor, and the praise. I do not say that the salvation here spoken of is the only study in heaven. I do not believe that the study of the Gospel will be the only study there. All creation is full of exquisitely beautiful and suggestive thoughts that give glory to God and to the Lamb. But certainly the burden of every song, the key-note of the richest anthems, will be salvation. They will see earth in its light, themselves in its lustre, and all things radiant with the glory of him who redeemed them by his blood, and made them kings and priests unto our God and his Christ.

They sing but one song. Many nations, many kindreds, many tongues are there, but only one song is heard. Why? Because its key-note is one, because its object, its glorious object is one. The "Hosannah" of ancient Israel is translated into the "Hallelujah" of the church that is in glory; and as all look to one blessed Saviour,

and all honor one God, and feel indebted to him for all they are and have for ever and ever, they sing with that harmony which none can disturb, that unity which no difference can injure. And, lastly, it is said they sing it with a loud voice. There are no cold hearts in heaven; every one in that group is in earnest. Their hearts are loaded with the recollections of a thousand blessings; and therefore earnestly, intensely, from the very heart they sing, "Salvation unto our God and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

The tribes numbered by Moses and Aaron have all passed away; nor should we desire a place in those once illustrious catalogues that have now ceased to have a place in the archives of the history of our world. But there is a book in which our name ought to be; there is a catalogue from which to be wanting is the most awful calamity that man can experience. Is our name, not in the register of Moses, but in the Lamb's book of life? Is it written there in the sparkling light of heaven? Have you any reason to believe from anything you are, external or internal, objective or subjective, that you are a child of God, an heir of Christ; and that there is a niche in that temple, a seat in that palace, a harp in that choir for you as an expectant of heaven, an heir of God and of Christ Jesus? One marvels how men whose days are a hand-breadth, whose existence is so precarious, who are crushed before the moth, and when crushed do not cease to live, but only cease to live in this world,—standing on an isthmus wasted by the waves of every year, and washed by the rolling inward billows of eternity,—how men standing in such a position refuse to look into the future, or to ask, What am I? Whither am I going? Is there any reason to hope that I shall form one of the

holy and happy group that is above? This world is not our home, it is a mere middle passage; it is the desert march of pilgrims looking for the joyous home of saints that are about the throne. You have not to do something in order to be destroyed; you have to lay hold on something to save you. Most people think they never can be lost except they do some monstrous crime. The fact is, you are lost by birth, lost by nature; and to be saved you must undergo a grand process, lay hold upon a great Saviour; and only through his blood, and by his Spirit sanctifying you, can you hope to be clad in those white robes and to carry those palm-boughs of victory and of triumph. The vast importance of the present moment is this — that every Sunday as it passes you have taken a step in one direction or the other. Every Sunday you have advanced a portion of your march to heaven or to hell. There is no neutral, insulated person on earth. There is no one occupying a position from which he can say, I have neither gone backwards nor forwards; but, sure as the heart beats, so sure the feet are travelling either to heaven or to hell. The vast importance of the present moment is this, that we are now sowing broadcast upon the earth seeds that will grow up into harvests of everlasting misery or harvests of everlasting joy. We are now candidates for eternity, we are building for happiness or woe. Whilst I speak and write, and you read or hear, time is fast rushing away. The clock of St. Paul's Cathedral does not strike any one hour within hearing of the same people in whose hearing it struck the last hour. Two or three that heard it strike eleven never hear it strike twelve; two or three that hear it strike twelve will not hear it strike one. There is a ceaseless funeral march, a continuous procession of souls to the

judgment-seat; and if our eyes were opened we should see the whole air peopled with souls rushing to the judgment; and if our ears were unstopped we could hear the trumpet of judgment summoning every moment to the great throne. Time passes; the morning comes like a bride, the evening departs softly and sweetly like a benediction, reminding us to ask, Are we saved or are we not? Let not ours be that awful recollection, "The summer is past, the harvest is ended, and we are not saved." Do we belong to that group? Am I sure of it? The possibility that we may be, should remind us to breathe to Him the prayer that occurs in the ancient *Te Deum*: "Number us with thy saints in glory everlasting;" incorporate us with this happy family; make us stones of this no mean city.

Heaven is not a solitary place, a hermitage, a conventual cell. where each is insulated from the other in loneliness. All the imagery employed denotes that our future state is a social condition: it is a city, it is a country, it is the general assembly of the church of the first-born. Christianity does not destroy our social feelings, it consecrates them. Jesus, who had so many souls to save, had a friend in Lazarus, and intimate friends in Martha and Mary. And those friendships which have been reciprocated below will not be destroyed, but purified and consecrated for ever. The future is the scene of perfect knowledge. If I am in that shining group, shall I be there and not know my next neighbor? Shall I be in heaven and not know him that stands beside me? Will Moses fail to recognize Aaron? will Abraham fail to recognize his beloved Sarah or Isaac? Will the Patriarchs not know their sons? Will heaven be a place where all those thrilling and beautiful recollections have perished for ever in

the bosom of the saved? Has the wave of oblivion washed out every trace that was there? No, no; but memory, or rather the heart more than the memory, will not consent to let its imaegry fade out till the grand originals appear. The light of truth shall fill every mind, and a sea of love shall overflow with its spring-tide every heart. The glass shall be broken, the veil shall be rent; heaven is a home; its inhabitants are brothers and sisters. It is a day without a night, a sky without a cloud, and a sun without a setting. "Oh that I had wings," many say, "like a dove, that I might be there and be at rest!" It will not be the extinction of what we are, but the inspiration, consecration, ennobling of all that we are. God made us at the first; what sin has done will be expunged, but what God made will be restored, reconstructed, and beautified. It is the scene of true unity. There is no united church here below; but there the church is one. I do not expect that in this world there will be perfect unity, as there is no such thing as perfect love, perfect holiness, perfect peace, perfect happiness. There will be differences upon earth; let us differ in good temper and in Christian feeling. But there all these differences are covered with the spring-tide of everlasting light, and love, and truth. That multitude is not composed of natives. In that shining group there is not one native of heaven. They are all colonists, all immigrants; they were on earth what we are now; they came out of tribulation, out of great perils, out of poverty, and sickness, and sorrow. If they got there, why may not I? The road that they beat smooth by their feet is accessible to us; the bosom of the same Father is open to us; the same happy home opens its everlasting gates and countless mansions to all believers.



## LECTURE XII.

ARISE, SHINE, THY LIGHT IS COME.

WE have arrived at a very imperfect apprehension of the effect produced when the prophecy of Isaiah becomes history.

“ Arise, shine ; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. The Lord shall be thine everlasting light.”— *Isaiah* lx. 1.

THE shechinah will possess a glory far eclipsing the glory of the stars ; from between the cherubim will radiate a glory that will make pale a thousand suns ; and that new light will reveal objects and disclose hues which to us are quite imperceptible in the light that now is.

In that shining light we shall see all beautiful things with far greater intensity. The light which now discloses to us the tints and colors of flowers, the beauties and splendor of the stars, of gems, and of the rainbow, shall die ; but the perfect light, which is to supersede it, will reveal all these things in intenser brilliancy, displaying beauties which we have not seen — hidden splendors, as yet concealed or disguised. We shall then find that this earth, the workmanship of God, has beauty and glory and

magnificence within it, which eye hath not yet seen, nor man's heart ever yet conceived. In that pure light all the discoveries hitherto made by science will appear as nothing when compared with the disclosures that will then come in waves of glory within the horizon. Mines of interesting thought, stores of rich and varied treasures will be laid bare, and exquisite harmonies, now silent, will evolve from creation. We shall find that all science and research have yet done is to bring us to the margin of the mighty ocean of mystery and beauty, whose contents and treasures remain to be fully and clearly comprehended. Then the tree of knowledge will no longer be separated from the tree of life; both shall own the same root and blossom on the same soil. The light which is to be will also reveal what the light which now is cannot do. The light of our sun reveals to us color—material color and material shapes, but nothing more. The light that is to supersede it will reveal not only these, but also moral and spiritual character; showing us that holiness is essential beauty, the highest purity the greatest brightness. It will unveil to us a glory in holy character far surpassing that possessed by sun, moon, or stars; by flower, fruit, and all things beautiful on earth. We shall then see that the purest beauty in this world is but a dim exponent of that excelling moral beauty to be disclosed in the New Jerusalem. But this new and glorious light will also cast its rays over all the history of the past, and will emphatically fulfil the words of our Lord: "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." At present much of our life is involved in mystery; many things happen to us, the meaning of which we cannot comprehend! That dark and freezing cloud, which now casts its shadow on your heart, and which you cannot un-

derstand, has its mission, and the new light will disclose it. That stroke which smote down your first-born and fairest, has a meaning and an issue, though you could not then understand it; and that blow which you cannot think of now without shedding tears of bitterness, will then be seen to have been but the touch of a Father who loved — a stroke inflicted by the hand that was nailed to the cross for you. That labyrinth, now inexplicable — that mystery now unfathomable — those dealings of Providence which you cannot now comprehend, will then be seen distinctly to have had an aim and a beneficence which shall awaken in you new songs of gratitude, and inspire you with deeper thankfulness to Him who led you all the way through the wilderness, and placed you there. Then shall you see all things to have been working together for your good, and that the darkest cloud had ever a smiling face behind it, and that the bitterest cup had in it a secret sweet. The great chain of mystery will be then lifted above the stream; every link will be luminous, and you will be convinced in glory of what you so much doubt or disbelieve on earth, viz., that you received not one stripe too many, endured not one pang too severe, were not subjected to one visitation that was not as essential to your ultimate happiness as that Christ should have died on the cross, and washed you with his own precious blood.

This glorious light will not only diffuse splendor over the past, but it will place us in a position for solving mysteries, and elucidating truths, which we cannot now comprehend. For instance, we often dispute about the harmony that subsists, or ought to subsist, between predestination, or election, and the doctrine of free-will. We read plainly that we are chosen before the foundation of the world; we read as plainly — “Why will ye not come

unto me : why will ye die ? ” We are satisfied from the one passage of the sovereignty of God ; from the other, of the freedom of the human will, as well as our responsibility. We are staggered, and cannot reconcile them ; they appear to us altogether discordant. But, amid the light that shines in the New Jerusalem, both will be seen to be not only great truths, but the one shall be shown to be in perfect harmony with the other. Take another truth : salvation by grace, and yet the necessity for good works. We cannot comprehend *now* how good works should have nothing to do with salvation, and yet that we should be called upon to be fruitful in every good work. We shall *then* see that the two are essentially connected ; that the one is as indispensable as the other. Now we see truths only in fragments ; then we shall see them as a complete whole and in full. Now to us truth seems an apocrypha ; then it will be an apocalypse. *Now* we see the greatest truths surrounded by the greatest mysteries, as the loftiest mountains ever cast around them the broadest shadows ; *then* the sun will be vertical, and no truth shall have a shadow. All things that we now see “ through a glass darkly,” shall then be seen “ face to face ; ” everything will be luminous in the New Jerusalem.

The sovereign purposes of God, which neither you nor I can grasp now, we shall comprehend in some degree then ; the Trinity we shall then in some degree unravel ; and, although it must for ever continue to be a truth above us, it will be infinitely more luminous and transparent then than it is now. The atonement, the incarnation, the necessity for the death of our Saviour, the introduction of evil, the influence of the Holy Spirit — these are all truths which are more or less wrapped in mystery now ;

but they shall all be robed in clearest light then; and in that clearest light all things shall be seen clearly. We shall then see that in this light will be fulfilled all the glorious promises which God has made. For instance, our Lord says himself, "I am the light of the world." He is so now really, but not universally; then he shall be so universally; then shall be fulfilled that beautiful promise made in Isaiah: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee; and his glory shall be seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Then shall be fulfilled that promise: "To you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing in his wings." Then that light which sparkled in types and glowed in promises — which appeared in the cradle at Bethlehem — which shone on the cross, and illuminated the grave, shall no longer be restricted to any particular nook, portion, or region of the globe, but shall overspread and overflow with its radiant splendor the whole habitable world; and there shall break upon the view a scene such as man in his happiest imaginings has never yet dreamt of: then shall be shown in that light the true unity of the church of Christ. It shall then be seen to be not what sectarians have called it, nor what exclusionists pronounced it. It shall be seen to be not a material uniformity — not a ceremonial identity — but a great and hallowed likeness of each to each, and all to Christ: all being one in Christ, and, therefore, one with each other. Then shall we recognize each other as we are. In the light which now is, we can see each other's countenances, and judge each other's actions, although we often misin-



terpret and misapprehend them ; but in that light, I believe, hearts shall be visible, affections luminous, and character shall show, and write and record itself ; and we shall know not each other's countenances only, but each other's thoughts and hearts even as we know ourselves. In that glory all creation shall be made glad ; there shall be no plaintive tone amid all its sounds ; no sob for the dead shall there break upon the ear ; all earth shall be paradise, all voices shall be jubilee, and, basking in a sunshine without cloud, and on an earth without decay, the world shall close, as the world commenced, with paradise.

But we shall see in that glory, what we *now* ought to feel more — the preciousness of man's soul. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" How few of us feel this weighty truth as we ought to feel it ! The part that is "myself" — the part that lives for ever — is not what the eye can see, or the hand touch. That part of our being, whose happiness we ought to study as our supreme object and primary aim, is the immortally precious soul, and yet it is now the least valued of all. That which ministers to its safety is least appreciated *now*, but *then* we shall see that one soul in glory far transcends a thousand stars, and outweighs, in its magnificence and preciousness, ten thousand worlds. *Then* we shall see that text luminous to a degree we never saw before : "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" And then we shall know it — not by the soul's everlasting loss, but by its everlasting gain. This light, which shall make so many things plain, is a light that will be still mediatorial — for the text is remarkable : "The Lord God shall lighten it, and the *Lamb* shall be the light thereof." The literal

translation is, "The Lord God shall lighten it, and the Lamb shall be the *lamp* thereof;"—meaning that Christ is the medium of transmission for all the light which illumines the New Jerusalem. And he *alone* shall be that medium. Ministers, sacraments, and ordinances, are the lights *now*, but these shall all be swept away: all stars shall be merged into the bright Morning Star; all suns into the Sun of Righteousness. Christ shall literally be "the all in all,"—the medium through which all light comes from God to us, and by which all praise rises from us to the ear of God, for ever and ever. In one brief sentence:—The light that shall then illuminate the New Jerusalem, shall be moral and spiritual light—the perfection of the light that now is; and in that new and more glorious light, we shall see what is mystery to us now, and see more clearly things but dimly revealed to us now.

Let me ask, therefore, in concluding my remarks upon this passage—Are you the children of the light? Are you walking in the light? Are you transformed by the light into the likeness of God? Is your heart in heaven? Does your imagination ever unfold its wings, and visit that blessed and glorious scene, and evoke in your heart the aspiration of the Psalmist of old: "Oh! that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest?" Does the contemplation induce you to set your heart, not on things that are seen, but on those which are unseen? Do you feel that all on earth upon which men trust is passing away? Do you not, from the spectacle of the overthrow of dynasties, the downfall of thrones, the tremblings and convulsive throes of the nations—in a word, from the shaking and uncertainty of all that is around you, learn to lay hold upon things that will and

must last for ever? The true way, I believe, to dislodge wrong principles and preferences, is to try to implant sound ones; we shall never sit loose to this world by being told that it is bad, or raise our affections above it by being told that it is unworthy of them. The proper way to dislodge the love of the world that now is, is to unfold and press upon our apprehension the glories of the world that will be. And just as the sun at noonday shining upon the grate puts out the fire, and just as the sun at day-dawn shining in the sky puts out the stars, so the splendor, and beauty, and magnificence of the heavenly Jerusalem will make so poor and dim all the glories of the world that now is, that kings shall look on their crowns as pale, and worthless, and see beauty nowhere but in a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Do you, dear brethren, endeavor not only to rest your affections upon that better and brighter scene, but do you endeavor to make it known also to others? If we are living in the light ourselves, we shall try to illuminate others. In proportion as a man is a Christian, in the same proportion is he a missionary. The intensest light casts its rays the farthest; we are made Christians that we may feel as stewards and trustees; we receive the unction of the saint that we may engage in the duties, and undertake the responsibilities of the servant. Depend upon it, that just in proportion as a man is illuminated with the heavenly light himself, in the same proportion will he lighten others. The intensest luminary spreads its rays the farthest; the greatest Christian is always the greatest missionary. He who is the greatest receiver of light from God, will be the greatest reflector of that light amongst his fellow-men.

Are we in the number of those who alone shall see and enter the New Jerusalem? Are we among "the pure in

heart," for they alone shall see God? Are we holy men, with new hearts, touched, and thereby transformed, by the Spirit of God? Speculations about prophecy will not serve us. Satan knows more about the Apocalypse than all the commentators from the Christian era to this day. It is not an increase of intellectual light, so much as it is a need of an increase of that new, transforming, illuminating, sanctifying light, which comes from the Sun of Righteousness, that we require. "Except a man be born again (we are told) he cannot see the kingdom of God." And, my dear friends, it is not difficult to ascertain if you are destined to become citizens of the New Jerusalem. Let me ask you what interest you feel in those foretastes of it to be had here below? If the millennium be a Sabbath of a thousand years, they only to whom the sabbaths on earth are sweet will be fitted for its enjoyments and employments. What, then, let me ask, is the Sabbath to you? Is it the sweetest day of the seven? Can you part with any day, but not with the Sabbath? When you are ill, do you take a day from Cæsar, or from Christ, for the use of the means of recovery? Let me ask, what day of the week comes round to you with the greatest delight, and occasions you the greatest happiness? Do you love the house of God? If the New Jerusalem is to be a city of perpetual song, thanksgiving, and praise — if there will be perpetual progress there in the knowledge of God, of Christ, and of all things holy, and of all things mysterious — do you now love the study of such themes, do you love the Bible which unveils them to you? Do you prefer a day in God's house to a thousand within the gates of sin? What is the house of God to you? — a happy place, whither you come with a glad and thankful heart, or a place in which to perform a melancholy duty

to pacify your conscience, or rather to do penance in atonement for sin, than to partake of those spiritual pleasures and employments which God has vouchsafed in it? If you love the Sabbath in this world which passeth away you will love the eternal Sabbath which will succeed the six thousand years of this world that are now drawing to a close. I believe that these six thousand years, according to the most ancient and best calculation, are very near their accomplishment. I believe that we are at the opening of the pouring out of the seventh vial, and at the commencement of scenes which will not last very long, but which shall be tempestuous and stormy beyond all parallel; the din, discord, and confusion of which, however, shall be like the preparation of the instruments of a great concert for the harmony and jubilee that will prevail over all the earth. And if this be so, let us set our hearts on things above, let us sit loose to this world, let us so pass through the things that are seen and temporal, that we may direct our attention mainly to the things which are unseen and eternal. I need not remind you that many of the things to which we looked forward, as predicted, have actually taken place. Since the seventh vial began to be poured out, the whole continent of Europe has been convulsed, shattered, and torn. Babylon has come into remembrance before God, and her judgments descend upon her. Momentous events have taken place since 1848, and it is now not improbable that the usurped spiritual dominion of Babylon will also soon be broken up; and when it is broken up, the Jews will march to the land of their fathers; and God's ancient chosen people will be invested with noble honors, and dignities, when they become visible members of the visible church of the living God. These are events we anticipate with



joy. They are the burden of a thousand prophecies — the aspiration of many hearts — the hope of the universal church.

We are upon the eve of a grand response. The spreading anarchy of nations is opening up a clearer and nearer view of that city whose gates are praise, and its walls salvation. It will soon emerge from the chaos in all its predicted beauty — the envy of those that are without the admiration of those that are within — the rosy eve of departing time — the auspicious twilight of opening eternity.

The New Jerusalem shall be the great metropolis of the earth, reposing in the light and beauty of an unsetting sun, and the crowns and sceptres, and thrones of innumerable kings, reflecting the rays of the shechinah, shall give the glory of all they are to Him, whose are their thrones, and for whom they rule. Laws shall then be leaves from the tree of life, love shall be the secret and the source of allegiance, and perfect liberty and light the possession and the enjoyment of all.

The whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God, and its humblest and its highest tenantry shall follow no longer the fitful flashes of human passion, or the meteor-lights of ill-regulated fancy, or the guesses at truth of wavering reason, or the dim lights of patristic or ecclesiastical tradition, but the pure and perfect guidance of the Lamb. Every province of nature, every path of the saved, every work of Providence, or product of grace, shall reflect the glory of God, and each inmate of that sacred and sublime metropolis shall walk, *i. e.*, make progress in the light of it, rising evermore on untiring wing to loftier heights of knowledge, and drinking ever fresh and ever multiplying delight from every new Apocalypse

of the glories and perfections of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

The kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into it. So it was predicted, many hundred years before John, in Isa. lx. 11 : " Therefore thy gates shall be open continually ; they shall not be shut day nor night ; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. The glory of Lebanon shall come to thee, the fir tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary ; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." Again, it is written : " The sons of strangers shall build up the walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee ;" and again : " All they from Sheba shall come, they shall bring gold and incense ;" and again it is written : " Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings." In Ps. lxxii. it is also written : " The Kings of Tarshish and the isles shall bring presents : the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all things shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him." And in 1 Kings x. 24, we have a typical picture of the splendor of the true Solomon, the king of peace : " And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armor, and spices, horses, and mules. And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore-trees that are in the vale, for abundance."

This prediction of kings consecrating their glory in the millennial age may refer to those who are now kings ; that is, who are so previous to the millennium, and who shall then bring what is their present glory and honor

into it. Some such reference seems to be indicated in 1 Cor. xv. 24: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." We must, of course, understand by the expression "they shall bring their glory and honor into it" — not any earthly royalty, adding one ray to the splendor, or one atom to the magnificence of the New Jerusalem, for this is impossible. They derive all their glory from it, and can add none to it. But in the same way as we give glory and honor to God, by acknowledging all we have to be the borrowed reflection of his beneficence, and to be devoted to him as its legitimate and proper use; so these kings and nations shall see all they are and possess in the light of the New Jerusalem, and shall trace on every honor, and blessing, and power, with which they have been endowed, the superscription of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, and lift up to him alone ceaseless praise, as the author and owner, and sovereign bestower of all. They will sing in their songs: "These crowns which we wear derive all their lustre, and these sceptres which we wield their sway, and these thrones on which we sit their strength and stability, from thee, who art the Prince of the kings of the earth. These flowers receive from thee their existence, their fragrance from thy breath, and their tints from thy smiles; and these gems are beautiful because thou lookest on them, and this scene is so glorious because thou art in it." All above, around, below, will be luminous with the light of the Lamb. These redeemed ones will sing with new voices David's song, in 1 Chron. xxix. 10: "Blessed be

thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come out of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now, therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."

"There shall be no night there;" as the millennium will be the sabbath of the earth, it will be followed by no night. By referring to Genesis, we find these words at the close of the account of the creation of each day: "And the evening and the morning were the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth day." But in the account of the creation of the seventh day, it is not added at the close, "The evening and the morning were the seventh day." As if the seventh day were to be the complete type of the seventh millenary, and that millenary to merge without an intervening night into everlasting noon. The negation, "no night," seems at first view a flaw, for, when we are weary and exhausted with the fatigues of the week-day work, we hail the approach of the shadows of even, as the precursor of repose and refreshing sleep. "No night," now, would be to us all the exhaustion of energy, and health, and life; but a little reflection will show us that what would be a calamity in our present imperfect state will be one of the greatest blessings of that new and glorious condition of which we have at present but a dim and distant prospect.

The resurrection body shall be capable of action without exhaustion, and labor without fatigue; we shall run

and not be weary, we shall walk and not faint. Corrupt, it is raised incorruptible; mortal, it is raised immortal. The spirit shall be willing, while the flesh shall not be weak; our bodies shall be wings, not weights to the soul, and the mind itself, retuned and restored, shall pursue its excursions into realms of beauty and of glory on untiring pinion, and with purged eye; reason will not weary in its pursuits, nor imagination in its excursions, nor the heart in its throbbings; "they *rest not*" (and yet they rest) "day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty."

We shall know in whole, and not in part. The glass through which we now see darkly shall be broken: there shall be no cold shadow from above, nor mist or exhalation from below; our eyes shall be brighter, our whole soul readjusted; all controversies shall be settled; there will be no dim medium, nor second-hand knowledge; we shall have strength to look and patience to learn each scene and wonder that each successive hour brings within the horizon of our view. The Sun of righteousness shall no longer be horizontal, casting broad shadows, but vertical, and creating none. Our horizon shall widen as we live; past providence, with its ups and downs, and labyrinth turnings, shall be fully revealed to us; and redemption with its glories and its wonders shall spread all luminous before us, with scarcely one undeciphered mystery or unexplained hieroglyph.

We shall no longer see through a glass darkly. Those objects which it requires the microscope to make visible in our present state of imperfection and weakness will then come clearly into our view, and thus wonders, mysteries, and traces of wisdom, benevolence, and power, which are at present veiled from our eyes, shall then be-



come luminous and visible; and in these unseen and unsounded depths — the mere surface of which the most powerful microscopes have revealed — we shall see such proofs of design, so distinct footprints of Deity, such marvels, that we shall feel that the sometimes alleged want of evidence of the existence of God was owing not to any deficiency in reality, but to our ignorance, and weakness, and prejudice, and passions. In what we now see of the minute, there is overwhelming proof of the fact and presence of Deity. In what we shall see when there will be no night, that evidence will be glorious beyond conception.

Nor will the telescope reveal less impressive proofs of the power, and greatness, and resources of Deity. Of these we have at present no weak conception; and the loftier the height to which the latest telescope carries our vision, the more numerous and magnificent are the disclosures of the greatness of God. "The undevout astronomer is mad," is a line that has passed into an axiom, and is universally admitted to be so. If this be true of the astronomer on earth, how impossible will all undevoutness be, when his observatory shall be the walls of the New Jerusalem, and the light in which all things shine, the glory of God and of the Lamb; and the eye that looks as free from speck as is the heart from passion and the mind from prejudice!

All creation will then lie in the light of revelation, and texts of Scripture, and facts of nature, glorify together "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." The original harmony between God's two great oracles, suspended and interrupted by sin, shall be restored, and all things, made fearfully and wonderfully at first, and all truths inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, shall

reveal their common birth, and accomplish their intended mission.

In the words of a living divine: "And although it be true, that night now discloses to us the wonders of the universe, so that to take from us darkness were to take the revelation of the magnificence of the creation, whence comes this but from the imperfection of faculties — faculties which only enable us to discern certain bodies, and under certain circumstances, and which probably suffer far more to escape them than they bring to our notice? We speak of the powers of vision; and very amazing they are — giving us a kind of empire over the vast panorama, so that we gather in its beauties, and compel them, as though by enchantment, to paint themselves in miniature through the tiny lenses of the eye; but, nevertheless, how feeble are they! Bodies of less than a certain magnitude evade them. The microscope must be called in, though this only carries the vision one or two degrees further; whilst other bodies, etherial, for example, or those which move with extraordinary velocity, are either altogether invisible or only partially discerned. And is it not on account of this feebleness of power that the eye seeks the shadows of night before it can survey the majestic troop of stars? That troop is on its everlasting march, as well when the sun is high in the firmament as when he has gone down amid the clouds of the west; and it is only because the eye has not strength to discern the less brilliant bodies in the presence of the great luminary of the heavens that it must wait for night to disclose to it the peopled sea of immensity. I glory, then, once more, in the predicted absence of night. Be it so, that night is now our instructor, and that a world of perpetual sunshine would be a world of gross ignorance; I feel that

night is to cease because we shall no longer need to be taught, because we shall be able to observe the universe illuminated, and not require as now to have it darkened for our gaze. It is like telling me of surprising increase of power ; I shall not need night as a season for repose ; I shall not need night as a medium of instruction ; I shall be adapted in every faculty to an everlasting day — a day whose lustre shall not obscure the palest star, and yet shall paint the smallest flower, and throughout whose perpetual shining I shall have the universe laid open to me in its every section, in its every recess, presenting me with fresh wonders, and preparing me always to understand them.”

It is then, too, that all disputes on many interesting and important subjects shall be set at rest for ever. Of many a revealed truth we can only say now, “ It is ; ” but we can neither comprehend nor say how it is. We now lean on the Omnipotence we cannot understand, and repose in the guidance of wisdom we can neither fathom nor comprehend. When our present night shall be rolled away, we shall not indeed comprehend the infinite or understand the inscrutable, for the larger the circle of light in which we stand the broader and denser the encompassing shadow ; but we shall see then what human eye has not yet seen, and hear what human ear has not yet heard, and conceive what human heart has not yet conceived. Now, “ we know only in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face : now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

## LECTURE XIII.

### WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS.

OUR brightest apprehensions of the Saviour are dim and imperfect. But it will not be so always.

“We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is.”— 1 *John* iii. 2.

JOHN begins this chapter by expressing his admiration at the height and depth, the length and breadth, the excellence, the sovereignty, and riches of that love which the Father hath bestowed upon us. The Gospel according to St. John used to be called the gospel of the Father ; that endearing epithet being about seventy times applied to God in the course of his Gospel. We can trace the same spirit, and the same pen, in the three Epistles that bear his name. Hence the language of the Gospel is almost transferred to the themes of the Epistle, where he says : “ Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” Angels are his sons by creation ; we are his sons by adoption and redeeming love. “ Therefore the world knoweth us not.” The world has still a vulgar, coarse, and material eye, that can see the gaud, and the glitter, and the

sparkling baubles of this economy, but cannot see or appreciate true beauty — that inner, moral, and spiritual glory which is all brightness in heaven, and all beauty on earth to the people of God. But says the Apostle, though the world knoweth us not, nevertheless it is true, “Now are we the sons of God;” that is to say, the world’s denial of our relationship is not to interfere with the comfort of our persuasion that we are the sons of God. Let the world deny it; let its gibe and its sneer strike you; let its uncharitable reproaches fall upon you; neither of them may shake your inner conviction, which is the spring of your greatest peace, that you are the sons of God. “And it doth not yet appear,” he adds, “what we shall be.” In other words, such is the magnificence of what we shall be that those dim and scattered earnestings of it which God vouchsafes only serve to give us the most inadequate apprehension of the weight and splendor of the glory that still awaits us. It does not yet appear anywhere what we shall be. “But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” Let us try to ascertain the import of the words, “For we shall see him as he is.” It seems to imply that our seeing him as he is will be the *cause* of our being like him; but the original does not so teach. “We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him;” and then, as like him, we “shall see him as he is.” We know that we shall be like him; and, in the next place, we know that we shall see him as he is. The illative “for” is not the literal and strict meaning of the text.

There are two great facts asserted: — we shall be like him, and we shall see him as he is. I would dwell upon this blessed hope, “We shall see him as he is.” What



does Paul call it? "Looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour." This hope is certain. We, the sons of God, who see him now so dimly, misapprehend him so frequently, and misconstrue his providential dealings so bitterly — one day shall see him as he is. This is the great desire as it has been the expressed wish of all Christians from the commencement of the Christian economy in Paradise to the present moment. Abraham desired to see his day, and praised him as he caught one ray of it reflected from the distant mountain tops. Isaiah caught a glimpse of the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the virgin born, the Man of sorrows: but the wreath of thorns about his brow so shaded and so darkened his intrinsic glory that the prophet could scarcely believe it was he. Another prophet, smitten with his beauty, thus congratulated his birthplace: "Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be least amid the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall the Ruler come!" And another closed the years of the prophetic age by giving expression to the prediction: "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise;" and another: "The desire of all nations shall come." In other words, Christ is the ultimate object of the yearning of all redeemed creation; he is the perfection to which all imperfection soars; he is the model all Christians would imitate; the Sun of Righteousness in whose light all believers would desire to shine; and seeing him imperfectly now, to see him as he is lives in a Christian's heart its deepest yearning — a yearning that in its wants and its cravings conveys a measure of the happiness that will be realized when this promise shall be no longer prophecy, but Christian experience and historic fact.

It is no wonder that Christians do desire to see Christ

as he is. He has suffered so much, and done so much, and said so much, that it is the craving of nature, were it not the instinct of grace, to desire to see him whose blood cleanseth from all sin, by whose stripes we are healed; to hear one word from the lips of him who spake as never man spake; to draw near and sit like Mary, not at the feet of the awful sufferer, but at the feet of Him who is crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. When you hear of the exploits of some great hero, whose deeds ring in the ears of a grateful and an admiring nation, how far and in what a crowd will you rush to catch a glimpse of him who has shed splendor on your country, and made its name to be power amid the nations of the earth; or some great writer, whose words have sounded as music in many a household, and whose grand thoughts have stirred men's hearts almost like a trumpet — you desire to see so great and illustrious men. It is human nature; and it is only perfecting that desire of human nature when we long to see Him whose words are breaking in waves of music upon the shores of every orb, whose fame is overspreading the whole universe with its imperishable splendor, and whose love angels cannot fathom, and the experience of eternity will not be able to exhaust it. Blessed expectancy! precious assurance! we shall see him; and not only see him, but we shall see him just as he is.

The aged evangelist in this passage, looking forward to that grand prospect, and numbering himself with all believers, says: "We shall see him as he is." What a glorious level, or rather what a blessed height! John says: I, the seer of Patmos; I, who have seen sights that human eye never saw before; I claim no superiority, no pre-eminence; I am with you, your companion in tribulation; I shall be with you, your companion in glory.

not I, but we, shall see him as he is. Mark the emphasis, too, in the words, ‘As he is.’ Some now gathered to their rest saw him as he was; and what a sad sight was that! — pierced with griefs; in one word, and that the most expressive, “the Man of sorrows;” as if his whole soul and heart had been saturated with sorrows, as the earth is saturated with its morning dews, — the Man of sorrows; buffeted, wounded, nailed to the accursed tree, laid in the stranger’s grave, all for us; wounded for our transgressions. The thief on the cross thus saw him; the Roman soldiers thus saw him; the scribes and the Pharisees thus saw him. We shall never see him as he was; and I thank God for it. Thousands saw him as he was, and perished in his presence; but all that see him as he is shall be like him, and their hearts shall rejoice for ever. But when we see him as he is, there will not then even be the absorption of every trace of what he was. The *was* will be transparent through the *is*; the past will be still traceable amid the splendors of the present; you will see Calvary, and Gethsemane, and the Cross, and the Man of sorrows, but irradiated with the splendor of heaven. John is himself our witness; for what did he see? “I saw in the midst of the throne” — that is, dignity, grandeur, elevation — “a Lamb as if he had just been slain in sacrifice;” the crucified not wholly overlaid by the splendors of the glorified.

And again, he saw one like the Son of man in the midst of the golden candlesticks, wearing many crowns; for myriads, he says, cast their crowns at his feet. What a magnificent thought! the highest hierarchs in heaven, the selectest and the choicest of the redeemed of mankind, take to themselves so little credit for what they are that they take off their bright crowns and cast them in flash-

ing showers before the feet of Him who redeemed them, saying, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto our God; unto him be glory, and thanksgiving, and praise for ever and ever." What a sight will that be! Before his presence sin, and sorrow, and death, and sickness, and the grave have fled for ever. The mock sceptre has blossomed into the sceptre of the universe; the wreath of thorns has become the crown of glory.

It will be difficult to conceive that he once was what the evangelists describe him when we shall see the central glory of the redeemed the object of ceaseless adoration, the glory of the universe. We shall see him as he is, because all media are then removed. At present in one sense we see Christ; for faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen. The apostle Peter says: "Whom having not seen we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." These passages convey that we have now of Christ a dim, dark likeness; real and true, but, owing to us, with great defects; we can form a sort of rough, rude conception of what he is, but we have no full portrait of what he is. In the language of the apostle Paul, "we see him now through a glass darkly." In ancient times, among the Romans and Greeks, mica, a very dim medium, was used for their windows, and at a later period a kind of coarse glass.

When we look at a beautiful landscape through common glass it is distorted, twisted, and refracted, by reason of the medium through which we look at it. And when you look at the finest landscape through even the best plate glass, this atmosphere of ours, loaded with soot, and and mist, and vapor, even on England's brightest days,

and full of floating particles, as every sunbeam will testify to you, prevents us seeing any one thing in its just proportions and intrinsic purity. The fact is, we never yet saw a rose as it is ; between that rose and the eye that looks there are so many motes, and so much mist, and vapor, and obscurity, that we do not see it in its perfection. Now we are looking this moment at Christ through a medium ; the medium faith, the mirror his word, the reflection from the sacraments of his institution ; but all these media are necessarily imperfect, and we do not see him as he is, we only catch, like Moses, a glimpse of his glory as he sweeps past us. But then not only is the medium through which we see that blessed Saviour now an extremely imperfect one, but the eyes of the spectator are yet more imperfect. If man were as he once was, I have no doubt that he could then look upon the noonday sun in all his splendor, and his eye would be refreshed and strengthened, not destroyed. Everything connected with man's mind, his mental eye, his moral eye, his physical eye, have all undergone a great deterioration ; and as far as we read in the Bible now we read that Christ's manifesting himself even in the most transitory way to his own struck them down. His glory burst upon Paul as he journeyed to Damascus, and it struck him blind. John could not bear the unearthly splendor in Patmos. Paul, when raised to the third heaven, — that is, to some near communion with Christ — was so overwhelmed by the intolerable splendor of the scene, dark from excess of light, that he too was unable either to express or to embody in his own eloquent words the glory of the vision.

But a day comes when not only the medium shall be altered, but the eye with which we look, the eye of the



mind, the eye of the heart, the eye of the conscience, the eye of the body, shall all be purified, touched with the eye-salve that John speaks of in the Apocalypse; and then not only will he be seen as he is, but we shall be able to endure — nay, not to endure, but to glory, and to be refreshed and strengthened by the beatific vision. The media through which we now see him shall all be removed. At present the whole economy of man is not only injured, but if the eyes of the mind, of the conscience, of the heart, of the body, be the instruments with which we look, who does not know that rising up from the swamps and marshes that are about every heart are passions, and appetites, and desires, that like mists, and vapors, and damps, darken the whole window through which we look, render the whole vision obscure; till instead of seeing Christ as he is, we are often constrained to say that we see him so imperfectly, and sometimes, like objects seen through a mist, so distorted and altered in appearance, that, like the poor apostles tossed upon the waves, when he comes to deliver us we think he comes to exercise vengeance, and we are afraid, or, like Peter, beg that he would depart, for we are sinful men, and not speak to us any more.

But a day comes, that day to which John alludes, when the eye shall be purified and strengthened, when no mists or exhalations shall load the air, or dim the eye; when in the clear and intense light of everlasting noon we shall see him as he is. And it will be a sight so magnificent that we shall count all sights worthless, and all scenes pale, and all beauty deformed, and all excellence as dross, in comparison of the excellence of Him who is the chief of ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

At present the Bible is precious, sacraments are pre-

cious, preaching is precious, hope is precious, faith is precious ; we cannot do without them ; they are necessary in this imperfect economy. But then they will be all swept away. When Christ shall be seen as he is, then all those things that are useful now will be dissolved. We do not want the perfect portrait when the great original is present ; we do not want the pure description when the great and glorious object of it is near us ; we do not need the telescope to see the near, for the distant then will have become near ; we do not need symbols, for the substance will have come ; we do not need shadow, for the body will have come ; and Christ himself will take the place of Scripture, and of sacraments, and of preaching ; and we shall need no more to be told about him, for we shall see him as he is ; and like Sheba's queen when introduced to King Solomon, we shall be constrained in a higher strain and in a loftier key to admit that one-half his excellence, and his glory, and his perfection, was not told us.

The Lord's Supper, therefore, carries back to as he was ; but that would not be enough ; it stretches forward also to what he is. That glorious festival is a pledge and a prophecy that we shall see Christ as he is. Like all the rites and institutions of this present economy, it will one day be merged in that future age to which all the past has contributed, and in which all the present will be crowned. The Lord's Supper reminds us of the beautiful sisterhood of evergreens ; the laurel, the pine, the fir, the cedar, that you find in the country in the depth of winter. They seem to retain their verdure to keep open the pathway of the returning summer ; they tell us that summer was, and they prophecy in their verdant beauty that summer will be again ; they keep open the path between the summers, cheering and reminding. Thus that institution in this

world's dreary winter is covered with fragrant memories of a summer that closed in Eden, but was redeemed on Calvary; and that will end in the everlasting summer that shall never have an evening, a winter or a cloud. It connects and links beautifully together the past and the present; the was and the is; the glory that is gone, and the brighter glory that yet will be; and it reminds us that as Christ was, so Christ will be. Faith looks back with retrospective glance to the cross, and sees him as he was; love looks upward with burning eye, and sings as its own under-song: "Whom having not seen I love; and whom though now I see him not, yet believing I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;" and hope looks forward to the crown, and rejoices with joy unspeakable that it shall see him as he is. Faith, hope, charity, the three Christian graces, derive nutriment, strength, inspiration, encouragement, from that holy institution, for it brings them all into exercise. "Now are we the sons of God."

What a blessed thought! If I be God's son, then my Bible is his letter to me; prayer is an address to my Father; I am admitted to the privileges of his home. The communion table is our Father's, we are the sons of that Father; we are heirs in reversion of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. When we come to that communion-table, it is not as Churchmen, nor as dissenters, nor as Independents, nor as Wesleyans, or if there be any other; but as sons of God. A father expects at his board not sectarians, but sons. But if underlying the Churchman and the Dissenter there be the son of God, let him come. It is our Father's table; it is not the place of an offended judge; it is not the scene of terror; it is a joyous festival.

## LECTURE XIV.

### THE WAY THERE.

WE need to be informed not only of the splendor and blessedness of the future rest, but also to be made acquainted with the way there, and the difficulties and obstructions we must encounter.

‘ Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.’— *Acts xiv. 22.*

WE are not yet arrived in the everlasting rest; we are still on the arena of conflict, amidst scenes of trouble, and through much, not a little, tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God. But even now there is a compensatory experience that as the troubles of Christians abound their consolations abound also.

The apostles and those that were with them confirmed the souls of the disciples, and exhorted them to continue in the faith. *To confirm* means *to strengthen, or invigorate* the souls of the disciples. Such strengthening we need greatly. Sometimes doubts cast their dark shadows over the brightest mind, and lie cold on the sunniest heart — doubts we cannot eject, demanding to be answered. not

to be ignored. These we shall find best solved by reference to that blessed word which ends all controversy and settles all doubt. Sometimes difficulties, and perplexing questions, and seeming contradictions, crowd upon us, and we cannot dissolve them. We need to have our minds strengthened to grapple with, and to master them. A doubting mind is more healthy so far than a mind that acquiesces in everything without examination. When doubts occur they ought to be answered, not to be treated with contempt. Sometimes, too, we are beset by conflicts and controversies between what pleasure and profit woo us to, and what conscience condemns and the Word of God denounces. Sometimes, too, the syren song of pleasure, the gilding and the glory of time, invite us to renounce the way, the truth, and the life, and to conform to usages we cannot praise. In all these temptations we need to be upheld.

If that upholding rested on our own hearts' strength we should very soon fall; but thanks be to God, there is One that perfects his strength in our weakness, and makes his grace sufficient for us. But the duty of the apostle, or the minister, is not to try to take the place of the Spirit of God, but to explain to the doubting, and the afflicted, how they may be confirmed and strengthened in that good course and in that holy profession which they have accepted. How does God thus confirm and strengthen us? First of all, by revealing to each of us exceeding great and precious promises. These, like stars illuminating the sky, like flowers beautifying the earth, are given not to make God more merciful, but to show us what he is ready always and everywhere to do for them that look to him and pray to him. The promises in Scripture ought to be made the material of prayer.



Whatever God has promised that you may turn into prayer. If you go into the future, seeing the depths that yawn before you, and nothing else, you must despair and fall ; but if you go into all its depths, its cold waves, its stormy trials, holding fast one grand promise : “ I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee ; when thou passest through the fires they shall not kindle upon thee, and when thou passest through the waters they shall not overflow thee ; ” “ a mother may forget her infant, but I will never forget thee ; the mountains may depart, and the hills may be removed, but my loving-kindness shall not depart, and the covenant of my peace shall not be removed ” — you cannot fail. In these you have springs of everlasting strength ; your feet are upon the solid rock — let the sea roar, let the waves rise, let the mountains shake with the swelling thereof ; there is a river whose streams make glad the city of your God, your heart is confirmed, your faith is strengthened, and you go into the future not leaning upon the void, but leaning upon the Rock of Ages.

God confirms and strengthens his people by disclosing to them the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. “ Satan,” we are told, “ hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.” You will not be perfect in the future, any more than in the past ; you will falter in thought, in word, in deed ; you will be constrained to cry from the very depths of your heart, “ If thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, who could stand ? ” But if the Spirit of God disclose to your soul the finished work, the atoning blood, the glorious righteousness, the perfect sacrifice of Him who died the just for the unjust, to bring us unto himself, then you will be confirmed ; you will see that de-

spair is not duty, that despondency is sin, and you will be brought back to that Rock that is higher than you, there to lay the burden of your sins, that they all may be forgiven ; there to receive that glorious righteousness trusting in which you are perfect, and spotless, and without fault before God. The Spirit of God confirms the hearts of his people by himself taking up his dwelling in the depths of those hearts. We often forget this precious truth, that not only did Christ die eighteen hundred years ago, not only did he ascend from the Mount of Olives into that glory which eye hath not seen, but that he has sent his Representative, his Vicar, to the church below. "It is expedient," he says, "that I go away, for if I go not away the Holy Spirit will not come unto you." Now if we be Christians the Holy Ghost dwells in our hearts. What a sublime, a glorious, I might almost add an awful thought is this, that the Third Person in the glorious and blessed Trinity takes up his residence in the recesses of the humblest heart of the humblest Christian, and in the nooks of that heart lights up the sunshine of heaven, strikes wells of living water that flow up in streams of consolation, preaches to the inmost heart what the preacher addresses to the outward ear, and engraves in indelible, in living and luminous letters all the love, and all the goodness, and all the mercy of our God ! Out of the depth and sweetness of his own infinite love, out of the fulness of his own infinitely merciful and perfect character, he looks forgivingly on our sins, our selfishness, our suspicions, our doubts ; and unrepelled by our unworthiness he pleads and intercedes within us with groanings that cannot be uttered, testifying to us of the love that never fails, of the mercy that ever forgives, of the Saviour that

ever intercedes, and of the gates of glory that are ever open. So we wend our way upward rejoicing.

The apostles also "exhorted them to continue in the faith." In progress in the faith. We all think ourselves far more learned than we are. It is wonderful how little we know; and he that knows most of his Bible knows and feels best how little he knows. It is the greatest and the most illustrious philosopher who feels humbled; it is the sciolist who knows nothing that feels proud. The longer I live the more I am convinced of this, that the most overwhelming proof of the Divine inspiration of the Bible lies in the heartfelt and experimental knowledge of its contents; and if the authors of the celebrated seven Essays and Reviews had known the Bible better they would have spoken with greater reverence and respect about it. Its irresistible proof of divinity is in its contents; and as long as you argue about it outside so long you can be met by counter arguments; but when you feel that this book has enriched your heart with peace, has illuminated your mind with light, has made the problems of the philosopher the axioms of the Christian, has given peace to your conscience, has lighted up the future with imperishable splendors, you can say, That the Bible is the book of God is no more with me a question to be discussed, it is an experience. It has long ago gone out of the region of discussion, and it has come into the warm and living region of experimental Christianity: "I know in whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep what I have committed unto him against that day." We do not know the preciousness of a blessing till we lose it. If you could be placed in circumstances such as would give you the idea of the extinction of the Bible, the departure

of Christianity like an evanescent vision, leaving behind it the consciousness of the awful, yawning vacuum and chasm in the human heart, you would then feel what a precious presence is the Gospel, what a terrible catastrophe would be its departure from the world and from mankind. We do not value the blessing of pure air, because we have never been wholly without it. We do not appreciate the blessing of pure water, because there is abundance of it.

By a strange law (and it is a very sad law), the greater, the richer, the more continuous our blessings, the less we are thankful for them, because the less we feel them. Those who have never been ill do not appreciate the blessing of health. We do not know the choicest blessings that are stored and treasured in the Gospel of Christ till the time comes when these blessings take flight and leave you without God, and without Christ, and without hope in the world. That time has never come to you, therefore you have never felt what a blessing the Gospel is. But you may increase and grow in experimental acquaintance with its beauty, with its light, with its loveliness, with its truth, with its hopes and its joys, and thus you will have an anchor sure and steadfast within the veil, which cannot be removed. We are to grow not only in the knowledge of this Gospel, but in the profession of it. How often do you meet with people who are not ashamed to profess to be scholars, physicians, lawyers, but feel utterly ashamed to profess that they are Christians. It is one thing to boast that you are a Christian — that is not right — it is a different thing and a very dutiful thing to profess and not to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Grow in the practice of it. What should a Christian's whole character be? A living epistle written by the

Holy Ghost, seen and read of all men. Grow also in your zeal and efforts to extend the faith. A blessing that man keeps to himself never is the richest blessing. If you feel it to be a great blessing you will feel it to be a great duty to distribute and make it known.

We now come to the most important clause — “that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” Christianity is not the source of the tribulation through which we must pass. Sometimes persons are disposed to blame Christianity for the troubles they have to deal with; but the truth is that troubles are indigenous to the world, and the offspring of sin. Christianity does not create the troubles, it creates the heart and the heroism that lasts and triumphs over the trouble and is more than conqueror through Him that loveth us. If you could extinguish Christianity to-morrow you would not extinguish sickness, sorrow, disease, death, war, plague, pestilence. The Gospel is not the mother of these, it did not originate these; if it has any connection with them it is in sweetening your experience of them, strengthening you to grapple with them, and making you more than conqueror out of the midst of them all. But Christianity does not exempt those that profess it from suffering. It is as great a mistake to suppose that the Gospel exempts its people from suffering as that the Gospel creates the suffering. For instance, when a man is truly converted, and his heart is changed, his nerves remain as sensitive, his nature as weak, his flesh as liable to pain, his mind as open to troubles, to perplexities and fears. The Gospel does not extinguish the experience of mankind, but it imparts to the Christian in the midst of that experience a vigorous and elastic faith which becomes the victory. Hence Christians must expect to meet with troubles like



other people; they must expect to be ill as other people are; but then we expect that they will in the midst of their troubles show that they have a capital on which to draw that other people have not, a strength to be made perfect in their weakness which others are strangers to, and that the Gospel that makes them morally to differ makes them mentally and socially superior to all that are aliens and strangers to its transforming power, its mighty and its blessed consolations.

And in the third place, we find here one of the striking proofs of the truth and sincerity of the apostles, that they did not conceal from the earlier converts what was before them. Mahomet concealed the dangers of the battle; he assured them only of victory, of progress, of sensual prosperity, and happiness. But it must often have struck one in reading the last words of our Blessed Lord, and the admonitions of his inspired apostles, how constantly they tell their converts, We invite you to no soft and beautiful lawn; we ask you to come to a battle-field. We hold out before you in this world no fortune, no *eclat*, no human prizes, no national and social dignities; we hold out to you a cross, shame, scorn, ignominy, contempt. "In the world ye *shall* have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." None but one who knew that it was the everlasting truth of God that he was speaking would have thus addressed the world in so plain terms, in terms fitted to repel men from the Gospel of Christ; and they were driven, therefore, to accept it only on one ground, that it contained the only name under heaven by which men could be saved. We must expect this year, and all the rest of our life, troubles. It is perhaps well that no one can tell himself or his brother what troubles are to befall him in the future. Sickness will no doubt gnaw

the heart and waste the beauty of one ; losses in estate, vicissitudes in property, changes of various sorts, will affect, and vex, and trouble another. Death will enter the home of a third, and lay his finger where we thought it would be last laid, and summon to the silent land one that we thought likely to live thirty, or forty, or fifty years ; and footfalls that are now music will be heard no more ; and countenances that are now sunshine will be lost in the shadow of death ; and hearts that are now bounding and beating will be cold and still in the grave. Into what home sickness will find admission, on what heart death will lay his cold hand, God only knows. But this we do know, that we cannot reach the everlasting rest except through tribulation — that we cannot get to life except through death.

But it is a blessed thought that a Christian's last sleep is everlasting refreshment, and that he passes from life not to death, but from life to life, and joy, and happiness for ever. But through tribulations of some sort we must pass ; that bitter yet not untempered cup in some shape we must drink, and he that has least tasted of sorrow's bitter herbs has the least signature on his brow and evidence in his soul that he is one of the sons of God and the heirs of glory. We shall pass through tribulation perhaps in another shape ; if not outer, it may be inner. There is many a one whose outward prosperity we admire, perhaps envy ; whose wealth we think all that heart can desire or that hand can possibly administer ; but we little know that that splendid equipage conceals a broken and a bleeding heart. We little know that the noble palace we admire as the evidence of the highest happiness actualized on earth may under its roof-tree have more sighs, and sorrows, and tears, than the meanest Irish hut or the hum-

blest Highland shielin. There is an inner sorrow far more keen than the world's outer afflictions, and it needs more of the Spirit of God and of the consolations of the Cross to mitigate, and to dilute it, and to sustain us in it, than in the midst of those more coarse and vulgar troubles of which all are more or less the heirs, and of which all have had frequent experience.

But if through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God, there will not be one drop more than is expedient and needful, nay, essential for us. What a grand thought that is — If I believed that there was no God in our world, if I believed that the world was consigned to chance, to accident, to change, I should utterly despair ; but because I know and am persuaded, on the strongest and the surest grounds, that there is not a thorn in your pillow that God does not see, and that he does not suffer to be there until it has accomplished the mission that he gave it — because I believe that there is not a bitter element in the cup of your life that God does not see in his wisdom to be most expedient, in his love to be most beneficent, therefore I can never despair ! Glorious thought ! consolatory truth ! there is a needs be for that great loss, for that keen and poignant grief, for that wasting and pining sickness. There is a needs be for the entrance of death into the happiest home, and for the ascent from your fireside of the most beloved and cherished ornament and glory of it. Give me that one thought, that God's love, infinite love, love that does not falter, and never fails, has decreed this, whatever it be, for me ; that his wisdom, infinite wisdom that cannot err, has seen it to be necessary, and that a presence that nothing can resist superintends its action ; then whatever tribulation I have to pass through, I know it was prepared and arranged

from everlasting ages, and that it is as necessary that I should have that ache, and experience that loss, and feel that gnawing sorrow in my heart, that pining sickness in my frame, that bitter prescription laid at my door, as that God should have loved me, and Christ should have died for me, and the Bible should have been written to teach and instruct me.

Let us take this truth home to our hearts, carrying it into life's troubles and life's griefs, into our sorrows and our losses, and then we shall be able to say, "The cup that my Father" — true of the meanest Christian here as it was of Christ — "the cup that my Father has given me to drink, shall I not drink it? Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Our Father in heaven, thy will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven." Such will be the feeling of a Christian in passing through the tribulations on every wave of which there is inscribed, luminous and legible, a needs be. If we have to pass through tribulation it is one of the proofs that we are in the right way home. That man who is walking on a smooth and beautiful road on which no tempest beats, where there are no rocks, nor broken stones, nor crookedness, nor cold, nor weariness, nor want, ought to ponder well, if not retrace his steps, for the presumption is the strongest possible that he has lost the way to heaven, and that he has taken a wrong road. But, on the contrary, when the winds beat upon you, when the frosts chill you, when the rough road wounds the feet, the weary feet that tread it, when the rains descend, and thousands of troubles crowd around you and threaten to overwhelm you, take heart, lift up your heads, let not your hearts be troubled; do not despair; yours is the seal and the signature of God, the mark that you are marching on the road that leads to

Immanuel's land, and in the midst of that great tribulation, spoken of in the 7th chapter of the Apocalypse, which culminates in a glory that shall never die and in an inheritance that shall never pass away. This thought lightens trouble and sweetens our experience of it, for it is the way to our Father's house, and we are on the road to a kingdom of glory.

If we feel that we are thus on the road that leads to heaven, that thus lifts us into the kingdom of God, let us hasten on. A traveller is always in a hurry to get home. What would you say of that traveller who was so charmed with an inn he found by the way, or so pleased with the flowers that blossomed on the road-side, that he spent all his time in enjoying the hospitalities of the one or in admiring the beauty of the other, thinking nothing of his happy and his distant home? Or what would you think of that person who, setting out by train to Edinburg from Euston Square, is so delighted with the refreshments at Stafford that he stops there too long, and the train leaves and he loses his journey home? You would say his heart was not at the end of his journey. So with him who is delighted with the charms, the pleasures, and amusements of life, in themselves legitimate and proper, but in the excess and idolatry of them most pernicious and destructive. So that man gives evidence that his heart is not where Christ is who is so charmed with the inn, so pleased with the refreshments of the midway station, that he tarries there, and loses for a day, for a year, it may be for ever, the route that leads to heaven.

Let us then learn, first, to expect tribulation. It is the law of our Christian profession: "through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." Secondly, let us learn to judge that we are in the way,



the right way, by the troubles that beset us in it; and third, let us while in that way draw down consolation, and comfort, and hope, from God, who has assured us that though no tribulation for the present seemeth joyous, but rather grievous, yet afterwards it worketh out the peaceable fruits of righteousness; that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Then let troubles come, let storms beat; let each future year be to each of us individually, socially, nationally, laden with worse troubles than we have yet witnessed, with heavier trials than any under the shadow of which we have yet passed; yet we know it is not chance that acts thus. We know all is accomplishing the mission, embodying the mind and fulfilling the purpose of our God. Not a tempest sweeps through the earth that is not needful; not a trouble breaks upon the shores of a human heart that is not necessary. If so, let us take heart and rejoice that we are in the road that leads upward to God, that we bear the signature of his children, and if children then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Throughout all the journey that yet remains may the Spirit of God confirm our hearts, may he strengthen us to continue in the faith; and in the midst of the greatest tribulations through which we may have soon to pass may he open in each of our hearts a living spring of living water springing up even into everlasting life; till when the years of this world are ended — and each year brings us nearer to its close — we may find it is only transference to a brighter and a better, to a kingdom that never can be moved.

## LECTURE XV.

### HELP HERE.

THE upper and under world have ceaseless intercourse by the new and living way. Angels come down in shining troops, and encamp around the people of God.

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” — *Hebrews* i. 14.

MODERN theology too much ignores the truth recorded here. Is there then any communion between heaven and earth? Have the redeemed in glory any sympathy with the redeemed that are on earth? Has the church militant directly or indirectly any actual relationship to the church triumphant that is above? These are anxious questions. As friend after friend passes into the shadow of the grave; as near and dear relatives ascend, in obedience to the invitation, “Come up higher;” instinctively our hearts follow them to the heavenly rest; and we long to know — it is an instinct we cannot help — if their love to us is as warm as our remembrance of them. Is the gulf between heaven and earth like the gulf between heaven and hell, impassable? Do those who fill the choirs of the blessed hear, or know, or see us, or in any way

sympathize with us who are in the cold crypt of the church below? It is a very common notion that the world of redeemed spirits and the world of Christians struggling upon earth are at the antipodes of each other, that the blessed in heaven are too happy to think of us they have left behind them, and that we have little to do with them; as if they would not condescend to look back, however earnestly and lovingly we look after them; that a great gulf is fixed between us, which none can pass. Is it so? Is there proof in Scripture that it is so? One text would settle the whole controversy, and solve the difficulty. This is certain, angels descend from the choirs of the blessed, and minister to the company of the suffering; those angels return from their ministry to the choirs of the happy; and can we suppose they will be silent on what they have seen and to whom they have ministered below?

When Adam and Eve were sent forth from Paradise, their retreating footsteps left all a wilderness behind them that was a garden before, they lost the favor, and forfeited the presence of God. But did God give them up? did he forsake them? They cut, as it were, the mooring-chains that fastened earth, the old earth, to the continent of heaven; and having done so, a deep sea, impassable and awful, rolled between them. Did God cease to have any correspondence with them? Did he let them go in their aberration from him without hope and without the pledge or the promise of reunion? The very reverse. First he told them, "The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head;" and that solitary promise, like a bright star upon the brow of night, irradiated their footsteps as they went forth into the world's desert, to fertilize its soil with the sweat of their brow, and to water its flowers with

the tears of their weeping eyes. A smile of God irradiated the sacrifice of Abel. God condescended to walk, literally to walk, with Enoch and with Noah on the face of the earth. Abraham gave hospitality to heavenly visitants in his patriarchal tent upon the plains of Mamre. Lot also entertained angels. And as if to show that the reunion of what had been dissolved was partially restored, he showed to Jacob as he slept in the desert a ladder, gangway, or pathway, between heaven and earth; and on this the angels of God ascending and descending; and Jacob discovered when he woke that, having lain down in a lonely desert, he had really been sleeping at the gates of heaven. When our Lord came, he said that this patriarch's vision is not the vision of an hour, but a permanent fact; he says: "Hereafter shall ye see heaven open, and the angels of God descending and ascending upon the Son of man;" that is, what the patriarch saw was not a personal and peculiar vision, but the opening of a great and magnificent truth, namely, that the angels are ministering spirits to them that are the heirs of salvation. There is a very beautiful line in Campbell's "Pleasures of Hope," quoted frequently as exquisite poetry, but which is unquestionably very bad theology. He says:

" Like angel visits, few and far between."

Angel visits are neither few nor far between; but in the language of our Lord, they ascend and descend upon the Son of man; that is, by Christ the Mediator. It is evident that we do not see them; that is matter of fact and of human experience; but still it may not be less real. We do not see the friend at Dover with whom we communicate at London Bridge by the medium of the electric telegraph; and yet we communicate with that

friend. We do not see the wire, nor the lightning that flashes along that wire as it carries the message on its wings, and conveys our wishes, or our desires, or our affliction, or our joy. So in the same manner we may not see angels, and yet every church may be filled with angels; our homes may be filled with angels; in our greatest trials, struggles, sorrows, griefs, angels may be ministering to us and strengthening us. But does not this interfere with the mediatorial work of the Saviour? Not at all. An angel came, we are told, and strengthened him; angels conveyed the pious poor man to Abraham's bosom; angels appeared in the cave of Arimathea, and preached the Gospel to the women: "He is not here, but risen." Angels not *shall be*, as if it were a prophècy of the future, but angels *are* — it is their normal function — ministering spirits unto them that are the heirs of salvation. In a very beautiful passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, not less expressive than this, it is said: "Ye are come" — not ye *will* come, but ye *are* come — "unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God; and to an innumerable company of angels;" we are come to it; we are placed in the midst of them; they encamp round about us; "to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven; to God the judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Or in the words of Milton:

" Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,  
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep ;  
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold,  
Both day and night."

That we do not see the angels is no argument. That the Romish Church has perverted and corrupted this truth



is no argument against it. Our mortal eyes can only see what is palpable, material, and tangible; but we know, and science has learned the fact, that there are substances in our world material, yet invisible and impalpable to us. The air we breathe is invisible, it is impalpable, though not imponderable; hydrogen gas is twelve times lighter than the air we breathe; we do not see it. So there may be agencies, powers, influences, in the air, in our homes, in our sanctuaries, in our counting-houses, in the world, on the ocean, on the field of conflict, influencing, actuating, strengthening, encouraging; not taking the place of Christ, but emissaries executing Christ's behests, and fulfilling his purposes of loving-kindness to all that believe in his holy name. We read, for instance, in the New Testament that fallen angels enter the human heart, and tempt, and touch, and besiege it. Shall we admit that fallen angels may reach the heart, irrespective of the volition of its possessor, and that good angels may not do so? Shall we believe that Satan can enter the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira to tempt them to lie and to do what is unholy, and shall we deny that holy angels may enter the hearts of believers, and whisper the strains of heaven, and spread around them the atmosphere of the blessed, and encourage them in the way that is good, and strengthen them to bear the burden that is very heavy? Protestants often recoil at the first hearing of such words as these: they instantly think, Why, this is Romanism. But Romanism is the perversion and the corruption of grand truths. Because the Roman Catholic worships angels, we must not deny an apostle's assertion that angels are ministering spirits to them that are the heirs of salvation; because they put the angel in the room of Christ, we must not therefore deny that the angel may be the

messenger and the ambassador of Christ. We may not see them; we may not know the media through which and by which they come to us; but if you will take a lexicon, or Cruden's Concordance to the Bible, and turn to the page on which is written "angels," you will be astonished to discover what a momentous part angels have played in the history of the world, and in the government of Christ's church. I do not see that this interferes with Christ's presence or with Christ's mediation, any more than what we call the laws of the universe interfere with the sovereignty and the immediate presence of God. An angel, for instance, appeared to Elijah, fleeing from the wrath of Jezebel, when he went, in the words of Scripture, a day's journey into the wilderness, and sat under the juniper-tree, and when he said of himself that he wished he might die: "O Lord, take away my life." He was on the very verge of committing suicide; he had given up all for lost, as he lay and slept under the juniper-tree. An angel touched him, and he took heart, and resumed his march of duty and obedience. When the Assyrian army went up against Hezekiah, the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp a hundred and eighty thousand men. In the words of a great poet — I wish he had been as good a man —

"The angel of death spread his wings on the blast,  
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;  
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,  
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still."

A greater than he, Dr. Chalmers, in his "Astronomical Discourses," writes: "Angels love us with a love which a family on earth bears to a younger sister." Perhaps angels in heaven constitute one family; believers upon earth constitute another family; and thus they feel

to us that affection which one family connected by ties of consanguinity, and sympathy, and place, feels towards another family upon earth. And is it not a very interesting thought that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him?" that God may send an angel to comfort, strengthen, encourage, and preserve? This does not imply that we are to pray to the angels, but that we are to pray to the God of the angels to fulfil his promises, and to make his angels ministering spirits to us, who are the heirs of salvation.

Connected with the intercourse between the higher and the lower world, there is a most interesting question, beset with extreme difficulties. Do our near and dear ones who have preceded us to glory in any shape or in any way know us, love us, or hold communion or intercourse with us? That angels do so is an unquestionable fact; whether those that have preceded us to the better land do so is a very different question. All that Scripture says on the subject I have gathered. The amount of its information I will endeavor very briefly to state. Bishop Pearson, one of the most earnest and most thoughtful men that ever lived, and one of the most learned, writing upon that article in what is commonly called the Apostles' creed, the communion of saints, says: "As Christ, in whom believers live, is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, so have all believers on earth fellowship with all saints who from the death of Abel have ever departed in the true faith and fear of God." In other words, the church of Christ is partly composed of spirits disembodied, and in heaven; partly of spirits embodied, and acting through the flesh on earth. The church of Christ is not a sect, a denomination, nor a party; it is what is called the Catholic church. No time tells its age; no

space includes its magnitude ; no figures can count its numbers ; all that are in grace throughout the world, and all that are in glory in the better land, constitute together the one church of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must not suppose that the church of Christ is either a denomination, or a sect, or even the visible communion of professing Christians upon earth ; it is the whole company of all that are in heaven added to the whole company of all that have been, are, or will be upon earth.

The communion of saints, therefore, is the communion of the believer on earth with all saints throughout the universe. Hence the apostle tells us : “ Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets as living stones ; Jesus Christ being the chief corner and foundation stone.” Christ is in the midst of that church, linking all together, cementing them by his love ; having laid them upon the one foundation, and making them grow up a holy temple, whose builder and whose maker is God. The same excellent prelate speaking of that same article says : “ The communion of saints on earth with those that are regenerated is demonstrated by their communion with saints alive. Death, which is nothing else but the separation of the soul from the body, makes no separation in the mystical union, and no break of the spiritual conjunction ; and consequently there must continue the same communion between those that remain on earth and those that are in heaven, because both rest upon the same foundation.”

Cyprian, the Bishop of Carthage, says : “ In heaven a vast multitude of them that are dear to us await our arrival ; a multitude of parents, brethren, and children, who are now secure of their own salvation, and are only anxious about ours.” Those that are gone before us

recollect this world, and those they have left behind them. It seems to me an irrefragable conclusion that those who have gone before us must recollect them they have left behind. The life that now is shapes the life that is to be; the impressions we receive in time we never can forget in the realms of eternity. Separate our growth here from our recollections there, and you separate the individual from himself. Were the past blotted out, for instance, from the memory of some one admitted into heaven, he could not believe himself to be the same person. As long as I am placed anywhere, so long the *I* must recollect what it was, what it has gone through, what influences it has felt, what motives have inspired it, and what progress it has made. Separate in my memory my past from my present, and you annihilate me—you create a totally distinct and different being. We cannot conceive memory to be expunged in heaven, because we cannot conceive the individual to be annihilated there. Place me in the heights or place me in the depths—place me where you please in the orbs of the universe—I must recollect the preacher I listened to, the sermons I heard, the Bible I read, the fireside by which I prayed, the roof-tree under which I dwelt, the sorrows by which I was burdened, and the joys by which I was gladdened. And if you could for one moment so separate the past from the present, earth from heaven, what has made me from what I am become, you annihilate me, and you place in my stead and room another and a distinct creation. Shall the lost in misery recollect those they have left on earth, as the rich man did when he prayed that some one might rise from the dead, and go and speak to his five brethren, and shall the saved in heaven not recollect those they have left behind them? I believe that those who have gone before, your



wives, your husbands, your children, your mothers, your fathers, perfectly recollect what you were, and where you were; and have not forgotten, but on the contrary see in intenser light and with greater sharpness, all the events, and intercourse, and communion, and incidents, and accidents, that God in his providence blessed to their conversion and everlasting life.

But I proceed a step farther. I believe that the spirits of the departed not only recollect those they have left behind them, but that they know vastly more of us than we know of them. Heaven — what we call heaven — is not a place, but a condition. Some have very foolishly tried to show where heaven is and where hell may be. They say that heaven is probably in those exquisitely beautiful planets in the solar system that rise upon the brow of night with such radiance and splendor that all watching eyes must admire.

Martin Tupper thinks the moon, which seems to us a wreck, and in which you can see no trace of water, nothing, in short, but awful evidences of volcanic explosions the most terrific, must be the place of the lost. We have no evidence of this, we have no facts that prove it; I therefore prefer vastly the opinion of Dr. Chalmers, that the saved, or those that have gone before us, are simply in an altered state. Our dead in Christ may be nearer us at this moment than our friends in Ireland or in Scotland, across the Tweed or beyond St. George's Channel. If they are merely in a separate condition, not in a distant locality, then it may be, that they see us and know us vastly better than we know them. The apostle tells us in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses;" what witnesses? Those whom he has

enumerated in that roll-call of the illustrious dead, the 11th chapter to the Hebrews, which immediately precedes it. What is a cloud? Water evaporated from the earth, and all glorious and radiant in the sweet sunshine. What is the cloud of believers? Christians that once were on earth; now lifted up, and shining in the glories of that Sun of righteousness who never sets. The apostle says we are compassed about with them.

Dean Alford, in his Greek Critical New Testament, observes: "This passage implies communion between the church triumphant and the church below. It proves that they who have entered the heavenly rest are perfectly conscious of what is passing among us." This is the opinion of a very sober-minded, learned, and able scholar. The figure that the apostle uses necessitates that interpretation; for what is his idea? It is this. In ancient Greece wrestlers and foot-racers carried on their exercises on the floor below; around them arose an amphitheatre, of which you may behold remains in the city of Rome at this day, in successive concentric tiers far up into the sky, without a roof, or any artificial light; the spectators sat in those tiers looking down upon the wrestlers on the floor; there might have been twenty, or thirty, or even a hundred thousand spectators. You know that if you were to look from the floor of an amphitheatre up to the vast concentric circles of spectators that look down from above, you would not see faces, unless your sight were preternaturally long; all would seem to you like a dim and a misty cloud, constituting a vast mass of human beings, of which you were the central object. All believers who have preceded us to glory are looking down upon us "running the race set before us," "fighting the good fight;" and he draws a motive from it: "Where-

fore seeing we are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses" — seeing our fathers, our mothers, our sisters, our brothers, all that feel interested in us, are looking at us; seeing we are the objects of such intense interest — "let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." This seems to me an irresistible proof not only that angels minister to us, but that the spirits of the departed in glory know more of us than we can know of them. Perhaps, young man, that spirit of a father beloved looks down, and watches you, and yearns to see you numbered with the saints in glory everlasting. Perhaps, daughter, that mother in the realms of the blessed hangs over you with an interest and a sympathy no words of mine can express, and cries, though you cannot hear the words, "Come up hither; run with patience the race set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of your faith."

Suppose that the spirits of those that have preceded us to heaven do not personally see, and know, and witness our experience or history upon earth; may we not most reasonably infer that if angels are ministering spirits on earth unto them that are the heirs of salvation — and of this we have no doubt, because Scripture has settled it — an angel coming from heaven to minister at Christ's bidding to a son, or a daughter upon earth, when he ascends to the company of the blessed will tell the father or mother there what is your state, what are your struggles, your difficulties, your trials, and how great and real is your consecration to the service of the Lord your God? The spirits of the departed not only know more of us than we know of them, but they must still constantly love us.

We cannot conceive that the love of a parent to a child ceases when that parent is made perfect. On the contrary, faith shall be lost in fruition, hope shall be merged in having, but love abideth for ever. Hence the redeemed that are in heaven and the redeemed that are on earth may, like Saul and Jonathan, have been lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death may not be dis-united. If therefore we must suppose that the love which fills the heart of a parent upon earth is not quenched in heaven — that the interest we feel in those that are our own flesh and blood is indelible for ever — it seems a logical consequence of this that those who are in heaven not only knows us, but that they love us with a love that never falters or fails. Very beautifully has a poet said :

“ I feel them with their rustling pinions sweeping,  
The damp dew gathering on my brow;  
I see them in their lonely vigils keeping  
Their midnight watch beside me now.  
I know that countless spirits in their love  
Are gazing on me from their homes above.”

But there is one text that seems still more decidedly to show this, and that is : “ The Spirit and the Bride say, Come.” Who is the Bride ? If we read the passage in Revelation xxii., we shall find that the Bride is the church in glory. The Holy Spirit says, “ Come ; ” and the Bride, that is, the church in Glory, says also, “ Come ; ” and that very fact indicates that the redeemed in heaven, who constitute the Bride, the whole company of Christ’s church in glory, feel an interest in those they have left behind them ; and if not personally, and directly, and audibly, which I do not affirm, in some shape they

say, "Come;" "and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Has a spirit from the realms of glory ever audibly spoken or visibly manifested itself to those who are sojourners and pilgrims upon the earth? I know of one instance only in the Scripture that proves such a phenomenon ever to have occurred; and that instance is certainly not one on which we can dwell with satisfaction or delight. It is contained in 1 Samuel xxviii. at the 7th verse, where we read the following words: "Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her;" it was a bad man that wanted this information. "And his servants said unto him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night." Now all this looks bad; he disguised himself, lest his royalty should be discovered; he came by night, as Nicodemus once came, afraid to show himself openly by day; and he said: "I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring him up, whom I shall name to thee. And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land; wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul sware to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing. Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel" — it seems the irresistible inference that Samuel actually appeared — "when



the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice : and the woman spake to Saul, saying, why hast thou deceived me ? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid ; for what sawest thou ? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of ? And she said, An old man cometh up : and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself." This same being, called from the realms of the happy, and sent by God for a mysterious purpose — "Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up ? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed ; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams : therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy ? And the Lord hath done to him, as he spake by me : for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor, even to David : because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me ; the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."

This is the only instance in Scripture in which a spirit was called by one on earth from the dead, and made communications respecting the past, the present, and the future. But it may be, that in the last times the upper

and the lower, the spiritual and the physical, may more intimately meet. Certainly in the last days there will be superhuman delusions and temptations so great that "if it were possible they would deceive the very elect." But I believe also that in the last days, in the language of Joel, "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." It is therefore highly probable that as the winding up of the great drama in which we play a part draws nearer, the future or the heavenly rest shall come down in clearer manifestation to this world. The Rev. Edward Bickersteth, whose judgment and piety no one can possibly dispute, says: "No part of divine truth" — and I was very much struck with this, and it very much influenced me in making these remarks — "no part of divine truth can be neglected without great loss; and it is too evident that the deep and mysterious doctrine of the Bible respecting evil spirits and good angels has been far too much disregarded. It has arisen from the wide spread of infidel principles; and on the other hand, from the unscriptural idolatry practised by the church of Rome, there is a painful prospect," he says, "of a sudden recoil from the present scepticism to an undistinguishing credulity." Dr. Owen, a man of great judgment and piety, says: "It is the height of ingratitude not to search after what may be known of the great privilege of the ministry of angels; God has revealed it, and surely this is not for nothing." Moses Stuart, the eminent American divine, says: "If then there are good angels and evil ones, these facts are important to us; as they both cast light upon God's providential government in the world." But suppose, now, these realities were to be made more tangible; suppose spirits were to come

from heaven and communicate flashes of celestial glory to the combatants of Christ upon earth in more visible array ; suppose spirits were to come up from " the vasty deep " in order to tempt and to seduce the people of God in greater numbers, are we to fear or to appeal to them for guidance ?

We are told that Satan will be transformed into an angel of light ; that in the last days there shall be signs and wonders such as if it were possible would deceive the very elect ; but we are directed at the same time to the decisive test and criterion : " If we," the apostles, " or an angel from heaven " — which assumes that an angel, or a spirit, for it is really not an angel, but a messenger, — " if we or a messenger from heaven " — he assumes the possibility of a messenger coming down from heaven — " preach to you any other gospel than that ye have received, let him be anathema." If we were to see at this moment burst upon earth all the splendor of a beatific vision ; and if an angel radiant with all the glory of the cherubim, which Isaiah saw, and seeing which he fell prostrate at his feet, struck blind, were to appear ; and if that angel, professing to be from heaven, bright with its glory, and bearing evidence that he had come from heaven, were to tell me that there is another name by which I can be saved than the name of Jesus — I should instantly answer, " Get thee behind me, Satan ; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

I agree with students of prophecy, that the three great worlds will come closer as the consummation draws nearer. It is possible that the spirits of the departed in heaven may come nearer us, and that the spirits of the lost in hell may also approach us ; it is very certain that Satan,

transformed into an angel of light, will try to pervert us; that messengers seemingly from heaven will come and preach another gospel. We have a decisive test; no miracle, no power, no splendor, no pretension, that asserts any one thing that is contrary to this blessed book is a messenger from Christ; and if any voice from the heights or from the depths were to bid you believe what is denounced in this inspired book, you need not hesitate nor fear in Christ's strength to rebuke it, and thus repel all the charms and seductions of its eloquence: "Get thee behind me; it is written."

The second lesson I draw is very important. The seeking to call down spirits from above to answer curious questions, if not rebuked, is certainly not countenanced in the Bible. Isaiah, viii. 19, speaking of the last days, writes: "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter," then what is the answer? "Should not a people seek unto their God? shall the living seek to the dead?" And then it is added: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." This, however, is perfectly compatible with what I have tried to show before, that the two worlds are near each other; that the spirits of believers in heaven may see us; that those that have left us are nearer to each of us than we are at this moment to each other; that spirits in glory do know our state, our struggles, our difficulties. If so, and if you want to send a wave of blessedness to the eternal sea, to break in music upon those shores that are bright and illuminated for ever, you will send up that wave in fulness and with force by more earnestly consecrating heart, and soul, and body, and spirit to the service

of Him who has redeemed us by his blood, and made us kings and priests unto our God. If you wish to gratify those that have preceded you, and I must quote it as a motive because the apostle himself has done so, you must detach your affections more from a world that perishes, and attach them more and more to a world that endureth for ever.

Our creed is a very short and a very simple one — no atoning efficacy but in the blood of Christ; no regenerative power but in the Holy Spirit of God; no rule of faith, or of conduct, but the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation; the cross without a screen; the Bible without a clasp; the way to heaven without an obstruction; and all things the servants of them who are the servants of our God and of his Christ.



## LECTURE XVI.

### THE BUILDER OF THE TEMPLE AND THE BEARER OF THE GLORY.

THE Author of the work of ages is also the Finisher. He only is the foundation, and he only the top stone. Under his eye and in his strength it rises every day, and therefore

“ He shall build the temple of the Lord ; and he shall bear the glory.”  
— *Zechariah* vi. 13.

THIS imagery is allusive. The ancient temple of Jerusalem, in which was the glory that burned between the cherubim, the mercy seat, and all the symbols of a more sensuous economy, expressive then to the Jewish church of those great truths which are now brought clearly to light, is the basis of the theme. Next to his God the temple was the glory of a Jew. When he prayed he turned his face towards it ; when he praised he thought of its incense, and its high priest, and its golden altar, and its censer. Whatever act of worship he engaged in, the temple was to him symbolically what the name of Christ is to us. It is not true that the Jew turned to the east when he worshipped, and to suppose that it is the duty of the Christian so to turn in prayer is unscriptural and

absurd. The Jew looked to his temple just because in the holy of holies was the symbol, and the type, and the representative memorial of Him who is the light that lightens the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel. There only sacrifice was offered; there only incense in the holy place was presented in the golden censer by the high priest of Israel; and from that place, where God had written his name, the Jew expected that his prayers would be heard and his praises rise like the morning and the evening incense. But the reason of the Jew's attitude when he prayed was not the thought of a superior sanctity in east, or west, or north, or south, but because he recognized in that temple the symbol and the type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There were three great temple functions which the high priest had to fulfil, each of which was an eloquent and expressive prophecy of our great High Priest, the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners. First, the high priest offered an atoning sacrificial bleeding victim on the brazen altar that was without, first for the sins of himself, and next for the sins of all the children of Israel. Without shedding of blood there was no remission of sins; every Jew felt that without a sacrifice there was no salvation. Therefore the high priest, the representative person of the Jews, offered up a sacrifice of an animal, whose blood was shed, whose flesh was burnt on the brass altar outside, an atonement for Israel. Our great High Priest by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. As the apostle Paul says, he suffered without the gate, bearing the sins of all his people; and it was true of him, what could not be said of any priest that preceded, or of any victim that was offered: "His blood cleanseth from all sin." We have thus a perfect sacrifice,

offered by a perfect Priest, on a perfect altar, incapable of addition, once for all, available for every sin of every human being in every nation, latitude, and longitude throughout the wide world, and from the commencement of this world to its very close.

Secondly, when the high priest had offered the sacrifice upon the brazen altar which was without, he passed into the holy of holies, as we might call it, the chancel of that magnificent cathedral, the temple of Jerusalem. Having finished the atonement on the altar of brass, he went into the holy place, into which no human being was permitted to go except the high priest, and in the light of the overwhelming glory, in the presence of the overshadowing cherubim beside the mercy seat, in which was the law, the high priest, bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraven on his breastplate, offered up incense and intercessory prayers for the happiness, the safety, the prosperity of Israel. Here also we have a type of the second act of the Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest. He having died a sacrifice upon the cross on Calvary, as the apostle says, having suffered without the gate — after he had finished that sacrifice, and when finished, by rising from the dead, not the victim of the grave, but its vanquisher, ascended into the true holy place, that is, heaven, where, says the apostle, “he ever liveth to make intercession for us.” But just as the high priest of old had the names of the twelve tribes engraven on his breastplate, our great High Priest has the names not of nations, tribes, churches, but of individuals, however humble, engraven in his memory, impressed upon his heart, acceptable to God through the incense of his eternal and glorious intercession; and therefore “he,” it is said by the apostle, “ever liveth to make intercession for us.”

He knows the trials that beset us without; he knows the temptations that gnaw and trouble the heart within; he is able to succor, because he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities: "he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." To every Christian that great High Priest who is in the holy of holies not made with hands, says: "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee" — I have anticipated him — "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

The third act of the high priest in this ancient temple is that which our Lord has not yet performed. After he had remained in the holy of holies interceding for the people — the people meanwhile standing in waiting and surging multitudes outside — the high priest came forth from the holy place, having offered intercession, and lifted up his hands and pronounced upon the people that blessing which Aaron was commanded to pronounce upon the people: "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace." Our attitude at this moment is that of waiting till the High Priest come forth from the true holy place to pronounce a benediction upon the whole heaven and earth. Christ has finished the atonement on the cross, that can neither be added to nor repeated; Christ now intercedes in the sanctuary within, ever living, and ever able, and ever willing to make intercession for us; and the solemn attitude of all Christendom, so far as Christendom is enlightened in the knowledge of the Word of God, and indeed of all nature, is that of waiting outside till our High Priest come down from the holy of holies and pronounce a benediction that will descend into

nature's deepest depths; that will rise up to creation's loftiest heights; that will transfigure the living that then live, and raise the dead from the sleep of ages, and dismiss death, and sickness, and sorrow, and tears, and make the last two chapters of the Apocalypse no longer a prophecy that we pray may speedily be fulfilled, but an actual history of an actual scene that we shall live and rejoice to witness. We have thus before us the figurative meaning of the high priest in the temple of old.

This temple was typical of a nobler, a grander, and a better one. What is that nobler, grander, and better temple, of which this was the dim and the imperfect prefiguration? The ancient temple is now in ruins, The Saviour himself predicted of it, as a threat as well as a prophecy, that not one stone should be left upon another that should not be cast down. One stone, measuring about ten cubits, or fifteen feet, in length, and a good many feet in breadth and thickness, remains, demonstrably a fragment of the ancient temple of Solomon. And that stone, as if the Jew in his depression would not let go from his heart the hope of his restoration, it is recorded by travellers who have visited Jerusalem, is worn half through by the application of the lips of Jews from all parts of the world that come and kiss it; and whilst they kiss the crumbling stone repeat the words of the beautiful Psalm: "Thy saints take pleasure in the stones of Jerusalem; her very dust is dear to them." This temple has passed away, and the Mosque of Omar has been built upon its ruins. Just where the Cross should have all its supremacy the Crescent predominates; where David's sublime Psalms rose the Muezzin proclaims his creed — a strange voice is heard where the glory was, where God dwelt, "There is one God, and



Mahomet is his prophet ;” words transient and rapidly dying out, that a voice more glorious and magnificent may come forth, and in the words of a hymn which English Christians frequently sing —

“ Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown him Lord of all.”

But what is the nature of this temple which takes the place of the ancient temple of Jerusalem ? It is described by Peter, the most satisfactory witness, and the less likely to be impeached by those who suppose him to have been — without the least idea in his own mind of having been made so — the foundation stone of this temple. Peter says : “ Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” And then he says this is the fulfilment of a prophecy : “ Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious ; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.” Parallel to this is that passage which has been very much misinterpreted and misunderstood, in the 16th of Matthew. Peter answered first, “ Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus said to him, “ Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona ; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” And then he adds, “ And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” An unfortunate mistake is made by confounding two words which are perfectly distinct. It is a great pity that our translators have rendered it, “ Thou art Peter ; it ought not to have been so rendered ; there is no connexion in it. Peter confessed that

Christ was the Son of God. Jesus then says to him, "Thou art Peter." There is no appropriateness in this; but the word which is translated Peter is *πετρος*, which means "a stone." This guides us to the way in which it ought to have been translated: "Thou art a stone, and upon this Rock, which you have just now confessed to be the Son of the living God, I will build my church." What is my church? The collection of such living stones as Peter was. "Ye as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood." And it appears the clearer by our recollecting that the two Greek words in this passage are totally distinct. It is in the original, "thou art a stone," *πετρος*; "and upon this *πετρα*, the rock which thou hast confessed, I will build my church." It is all beauty and consistency in the original: "Thou art a stone, a living stone, and upon this, the rock" — what rock? the everlasting Rock which you have confessed to be the Son of the living God — "I will build the living stones, the living Peters, such as you are, and the gates of hell" — which have prevailed against the Temple of Solomon, and raised the Mosque of Omar over its ruins — "shall not prevail against this, the temple of God."

Now nothing can be plainer or more beautiful than this. I have searched out and have collected from Greek writers illustrations of the distinct meaning of these words. In the vast majority of instances, *πετρος*, the word applied to Peter, "Thou art a stone," means a little stone; something that can be lifted, something that can be thrown by the hand. In the Septuagint and New Testament it always means a stone. One Greek writer uses the phrase, "to be stoned with stones," *πετροποιουν*; stones that a person can throw and strike another with. Again, we read

in Homer of *νιφας πετρων*, "shower of stones," that is, small stones. But the Greek word *πετρα*, wherever it is employed, as far as I know, is used to denote an imbedded, solid, massive rock. For instance, one writer speaks of the ship's being thrown, *επι ταις πετραις*, "upon the rocks;" and again he speaks of the army finding water, *εν γλαφυρη πετρα*, "in a hollow rock," where the word means a massive, imbedded, solid, immovable rock. If the Saviour had meant to teach that the church should be built on Peter, he would have said *συ εις πετρος και επι τουτω τω πετρω*, &c.; therefore he says to Peter, "thou art a stone," a very precious stone, a living stone, but still a stone; "and not upon thee, the stone, but upon me, the rock that you have confessed, I will build the *ιην εκκλησιαν*, which is the collection or aggregate of living stones, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Augustine represents the Saviour saying, *Super me edificabo te, non super te*.

Thus we have that true temple that succeeds the temple that has passed away, and as its first and its most distinctive characteristic it is composed of living stones, not dead and perishable materials. These stones are found in the quarry, cold, dead, lifeless; they are selected by the Master Builder of the church; they are quickened by his celestial breath; they are made living stones by his almighty power; they are placed in rows and tiers of perfection and beauty in the massive edifice that he is building, till it will be said in the end what is now said of its progress: "Ye are all built living stones on Christ the Rock of Ages, a living Temple, whose builder and whose maker is God." Such are the component parts of that edifice which has Christ, the Rock of Ages, and him alone, for its foundation.

This church, thus built of living stones, laid upon Christ, the living Rock, is the one catholic, apostolic, holy Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The holy catholic, apostolic church is not the signature of a sect, but the distinctive name of that church which is composed of living stones, laid upon the Son of God, the Rock of Ages. The floor of this church is sand, and rock, and green trees, and flower, and river, and sea; the whole earth is its variegated and its beautiful floor; its high altar is the Son of God; its roof the majesty of Deity. The cement that knits its living stones each to the other, and all to the Rock of Ages, is the cement of eternal, inexhaustible, imperishable love. And in this temple, because the whole earth is its floor, and the whole sky is its dome, and wherever Christ's name is named is its consecration, and wherever three people are gathered together in his name, there the High Priest is present in the midst of them. In this catholic, apostolic church the evening song no sooner dies in the west than it is wakened by the myriads of living voices that take it up in the east. There is daily service in this church; a ceaseless anthem; prayer that never ends. We enter on the shades of night; at the Antipodes they are just beginning their morning prayers at the dawn of day; and again in other parts it will be mid-day, in other parts it will be the forenoon. And thus over all the floor of this grand cathedral — a floor variegated as the surface of the earth — there are worshippers ever kneeling, ever praying, ever praising; so that the anthem never ceases, the service is never at an end, the sacred sanctuary of the world-wide temple is never empty of worshippers.

This holy catholic and apostolic church is God's special dwelling-place. He speaks of the ancient temple in such

words as these: "Here will I dwell." David calls it the palace of the great King. In this holy catholic, apostolic church the High Priest walks at morning, and noon, and night; watches the golden candlesticks; pours oil into the lamps ever as it is exhausted; speaks to each worshipper a word of peace, bringing into each heart an inspiration of strength; and is ever present where two or three are gathered on its consecrated floor. What are all the denominations of true believers? We speak in this imperfect economy of those most imperfect things, denominations, sects; but after all, what are they? On the continent of Europe the true religion is most minutely caricatured; so much so that if you want to understand the Roman Catholic system you must first understand what the millennial church is. The high priest first sacrifices, then he intercedes, then he comes out and blesses the people. The Pope assumes to be a sacrificing priest, offers sacrifice; next intercession in his holy place; and lastly he comes out to the western window of St. Peter's once a year, and lifts up his hands — æsthetically looked at, a sublime and magnificent spectacle; religiously and morally looked at, a caricature, an attempt to anticipate and supersede what will take place at the commencement of the millennial day, when our High Priest comes down from his holy place and pronounces a benediction that, unlike that of the Pope, will have power, and efficacy, and effect.

On the continent of Europe I have noticed, at Amiens, at Antwerp, and other chief cathedrals, what are called side chapels; each side chapel has often a distinct service, a priest officiating in each, and people kneeling in some act of devotion to the patron saint or saintess supposed to preside over it and to give it its name. What are denom-



inations with us? Just the side chapels of this holy, catholic, apostolic, glorious, living church, all of them worshipping on the same floor; all beneath the roof of the same majestic cathedral; all joining in the same anthem strain; all giving the glory, and the honor, and the thanksgiving, and the praise, not as in Europe's side chapels, to the Virgin, to St. Peter, to St. Paul, but in different dialects of the same catholic tongue, in different side chapels of the same grand cathedral, under the same roof, on the same consecrated floor, in the universal strain: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, and glory, and riches, and power, for he was slain for us." Here then is the true idea of the church universal.

This is the only church in which there is salvation. We can say of this everything that the Tractarian and the Roman Catholic say of their respective systems. They hold a great truth, only they localize and sectarianize what is not catholic. Hence we say there is no salvation out of this church; but what church? The aggregate of living stones. If you be a living stone you are a churchman; if you are not a living stone it does not matter who absolves you, nor to what communion you belong; you do not belong to that holy, catholic, and apostolic church whose foundation is the Rock of Ages, whose walls are made up of living stones, whose high altar is the Son of God, whose majestic roof is the omnipotence of the Eternal, in which there is ceaseless song, and the floor of which is coextensive with the surface of the whole globe.

Of this church Christ shall bear the glory, as the builder as well as the foundation. It seems strange that he should be the foundation of it, that he should be the builder of it, and lastly, that he should be the top stone

of it. But we apply to Christ words that can be applied to none besides. He is all and in all, because he is God as well as man; he is alike the foundation and the top stone, the Alpha and the Omega; the builder of it, the altar, and the glory in the midst of it. First of all he devised and laid down in all the minute specifications the great and glorious plan of a house not made with hands; his wisdom alone sketched the plan. He purchased every stone with his precious blood, so that we can say to every living stone, that is, every living Christian, "Ye have been bought not with gold, nor silver, nor any corruptible thing, but with the precious blood of a Lamb without spot and without blemish." He fixes every stone in the place that fits it, and just where it should be placed.

Christians often complain that they are not where they would be. If you were where you would be your ruin perhaps would be irretrievable. You have to thank God, the only Founder of the church, the great Builder of the cathedral, that he selects you, that he quickens you, and places you where you ought to be, and nowhere else. Thank God, then, that if he has not made you a buttress, or a carved and decorated ornament, he has made you a hidden living stone in that glorious cathedral. The place of beauty, the place of honor, would not be expedient for you, or you would be there; but the place of safety is eternally yours, because you are a living stone, however hidden, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and selected by him to be part and parcel of that grand fabric that advances every day amid rising and setting suns, and over which one day — and it may be very soon — there will ring from heaven the angels' shout: "Grace, grace unto it." What is affliction? what is poverty? what is sickness? what is the loss of those that you love? It is God

shaping a living stone for the place he means you to occupy for ever, and it is just as necessary for you as that he should have chosen you. Those jewels that are the most precious need the most of the workman's skill and the longest application of the workman's tools in order to polish them; and those in this church universal, the stones in this magnificent cathedral, that are most afflicted and tried are the most precious. God is polishing you either to be a gem to sparkle in his everlasting diadem, or to be a stone exalted in that fabric which he is filling with his glory, which he has sketched in his word, and the foundations of which are those of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

Finally, he will lay upon this edifice the top stone itself; the prophet tells us so; he will lay on it the top stone, and the voice will be heard: "Grace, grace unto it." Perhaps that applied to the ancient temple; but a voice more majestic will ring from earth to heaven, and return in musical reverberations from heaven to earth, not "Grace, grace unto it," but the voice of a great multitude that no man can number, "as the voice of many waters." What a noble thought! Have you ever stood upon the beach or upon the pier, when the sea has been smitten by the huge tempest? What a rolling magnificence, what a glorious sound is in the noise of the ocean when its waves, like white-robed choristers, lift up their voices and praise Him who made the sea and the dry land, and underneath is that deep, rolling boom, to listen to which as we sleep by the seaside is one of the greatest charms, I think, in the world! There will be a voice like the noise of many waves, like the noise of the great sea, and like the noise of mighty thunders, saying, "Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

He who is thus the foundation of the temple, who thus builds the temple, shall also bear the glory of it. Here is a great truth that anathematizes the habit and the practice of the visible church upon earth, of calling its sections by distinctive names. The names Calvinist, Lutheran, Wesleyan, are most objectionable in themselves; they are, as far as those names go, like the side chapels in the Roman Catholic cathedrals, each dedicated to a saint, instead of each dedicated to God. I do not mean to say that those who retain those names give worship to those that founded them: God forbid! Some of the noblest and most devoted Christians are to be found in each. But it is a defect that we should write upon a single side chapel, John Wesley, just as it is a defect that you should write up St. Peter's Chapel, or Mary's Chapel, or call them by any name than that name which ought to supersede and to extinguish by its glory every name—the name to which every knee shall bow, the name which every tongue shall one day confess.

Then Christ shall bear all the glory of this church; this apostolic, this catholic church; this grander temple than the world ever saw; this more glorious collection of precious stones than coronet or kingly crown ever had. Christ shall have all the glory of its plan, all the glory of its device, all the glory of its original magnificent conception. He shall bear the glory also of its progress. We often think that we are building this church, and there is a sense in which we are. The apostle Paul calls himself an under-builder; we are builders; every Christian who teaches in a ragged school or a Sunday school, who distributes a tract or a Bible, who visits the poor, the sick, and the ignorant, and tries to teach them, is so far building, helping Christ to build. "We are," says the

apostle, "fellow-workers with Christ." What an honor to be asked to contribute a single shilling to Christ's cause! What an honor to be allowed to contribute to remove the rubbish that conceals some stone in the quarry, that the breath and the sunshine of heaven may settle upon it and quicken it into immortal life! It is happiness as well as honor. Do not give as a penance, do not give as a duty, do not give because there is a twinge of conscience, but give because it is a noble privilege to contribute even a halfpenny to the completion and the perfection of that glorious edifice in which I trust you are living stones as well as under-workmen. Christ has all the glory of its progress. Obstructions will be melted into contributions; oppositions will be changed into impulses. When we look abroad upon the world we see some willing and consecrated under-builders of the glorious edifice; but there are others not so. The King of Italy, the Pope of Rome, the Emperor of the French, the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of Russia, are merely men clearing away the rubbish that conceals the living stones, that God's breath may touch them and God's sunshine may warm them, and that thus may be expedited the completion and the perfection of that glorious edifice of the progress of which Christ alone shall have all the glory. He will have all the glory not only of its progress, but of its worship. The name that should overspread it should be the name of Christ alone. Churches should not be called after saints. What we call churches or side chapels should never be called after saints — neither St. Peter's Church, nor St. John's Church, nor St. Paul's Church, nor St. Andrew's Church; they ought to be called Trinity Church, Christ's Church — such only are sublime, and sacred, and noble names. In this grand



edifice, whose variegated floor is sand, and rock, and soil, and grass, and flower — in this grand cathedral, whose alone foundation is the Rock of Ages, whose high altar is the Son of God, whose High Priest walks amid its golden candlesticks perpetually — in its praises Christ alone should be the key-note, in its prayers Christ's name alone should be the pass-word; when we gather together it should be in his name; when we baptize, in his name only; and when we come to the Lord's table, we come not to join a sect, nor to ally ourselves with a chapel, but to do this in remembrance of him only. Let Christ, therefore, in baptism, in the Lord's Supper, in our prayers, and in our praises, have all the glory in this sublime cathedral, this perfect sanctuary, this church of the living God.

Lastly, he will have all the praise of its completion. It has risen slowly; during eighteen hundred years it has been growing, and it has been literally true no weapon formed against it has prospered. In the place where Rousseau wrote his sensual, infidel works, there is a department of the Bible Society. In places where Romanism was supreme, Protestant truth now, in Italy and France, is preached in all its fulness. In every instance the wrath of man has been overruled to praise him; and the gates of hell, however hard they have pressed, have not prevailed against it. All his love, all his power, all his promises, all his faithfulness, all his honor, are mortgaged to the completion, and the perfection, and the perfect splendor of that edifice which will supersede all past temples, and be the glory and the ornament of all.

At last the scaffolding of this grand cathedral shall be removed. What is the Lord's supper? scaffolding; what is baptism? scaffolding; what are all our arrangements,

whether they be denominational or otherwise? just scaffolding. Well, when all the scaffolding is removed, and the splendid edifice is seen in all its perfection and its proportions, what a hymn will be sung by ten thousand times ten thousand voices! what a glory will flash then from its every tower, and pinnacle, and stone, and shrine, and altar! But I need not describe it; the specification, the splendor, the beauty, the perfection of it, are spoken of in language so fine that the very reading of it sounds like one of Handel's strains, the very words seem notes, and the whole chapter massive and magnificent harmony: "The building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst."

I have often said precious stones are the broken fragments of ancient Paradise. At that explosion of which our sin was the igniting spark, these precious stones were broken into fragments. Admired by kingly eyes, and worn in kingly crowns, they are bits of Paradise; and hence there are two things on earth excessively beautiful and lovely — the flowers that come forth in summer, and precious stones. These are permanent flowers; amaranthine blossoms; they do not fade, they are always beautiful. Why should not women wear these? They are the most beautiful remains of Eden; they are almost sacred; they will be part of the future glory. Your adorning, says Peter, is not to be these things. He does not forbid the

use of these things, he only says these things are not to be your glory, nor to be your chief ornament; you are to look higher than these — to the ornament of a meek, and a quiet, and a gentle spirit. Precious stones remind me of Paradise that was, and prophesy to me of this more beautiful cathedral that will be. God has selected these to be the foundations of that grand cathedral whose founder, whose builder, whose glory, whose high altar is Christ. In language most magnificent, language that one never wearies reading: “I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”

Then what an exquisite thought is that: “And God” — when he shall bring forth the top stone, when the edifice shall be completed, and this world lasts till the last living stone has been quickened and laid upon Christ the foundation stone — “shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there. And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever.” Grand cathedral! glorious edifice! in every light worthy of Him who bears its glory! It is meet, it is essential, it ought to be your prayer, that you should find a place in it.

Let me ask, are you living stones? Have your hearts been quickened by the warmth of celestial sunshine?

Have you been taken out of the cold, dead, shattered quarry of this present cold, miserable, fallen earth, and feel you in your hearts something of the temperature of the sky? Is your worship the adoration of that spotless Lamb? Are there in your hopes the expectation of standing before Him who has redeemed you by his blood, and praising and adoring Him for ever and ever? What are all our local churches? what is the edifice in which you worship every Sunday? Just a shed in which the workmen are working with Christ to build up this grand cathedral. What is the noblest cathedral in England, as it is called? A workshop, where stones are being prepared for the great Master Builder, to be fastened into that glorious edifice, living stones in a living cathedral. And what do we on a communion Sunday? We try to bring down from the sunny heights of heaven a little of its sweet sunshine to give us a reminiscence of a glory that has faded, and to give us — blessed be God! — the earnest and the foretaste of a glory that will come again when the top stone shall be He who is the foundation stone, and we shall meet where our songs have no discord, where our prayers have no imperfection, where our service shall never weary, for they serve him day and night without ceasing.

O thou living Rock of Ages, make each of us a living stone in thine own sublime edifice, and thou shalt bear the glory! Amen.

## LECTURE XVII.

### THE LAST AND PERFECT EXHIBITION.

THIS year, 1862, the kings and nations of the earth are gathering together to see and admire the treasured glories of art, civilization, and science. It suggests, what is rather contrast than comparison, the descent from heaven of the city of God — the palace of the earth — to set forth the glory of which heaven and earth contribute their united riches and splendors

“And the building of the wall of it was of jasper : and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper ; the second, sapphire ; the third, a chalcedony ; the fourth, an emerald ; the fifth, sardonyx ; the sixth, sardius ; the seventh, chrysolite ; the eighth, beryl ; the ninth, a topaz ; the tenth, a chrysoprasus ; the eleventh, a jacinth : the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls ; every several gate was of one pearl : and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein : for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it : and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day : for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honor of nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter



into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie : but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month : and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse : but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it ; and his servants shall serve him ; and they shall see his face ; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there ; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever."—*Revelation* xxi. 18–xxii. 5.

THE apocalyptic picture suggests, by way of contrast, the evanescence of all that is an approximation to it. Man tries to imitate the heavenly, but his brightest and most beautiful approximation is only a splendid failure. What man attempts upon the earth is evidence of yearnings in his soul after a perfection, a beauty, a glory which this world cannot furnish. These yearnings are Divine instincts — indomitable instincts, not to be disappointed, but to the utmost gratified when the New Jerusalem shall come down from heaven, and the splendid picture that is here set in prophecy shall be fulfilled in fact, in the world's history, and in the Christian's grateful experience.

Earth has been often the scene of great gatherings. Sometimes men have met in countless hosts to battle ; sometimes to celebrate the Olympic games, and races, and wrestlings. Once they came as the Crusaders of old, under the auspices of a Pope, who was foolish enough to consecrate such folly, and at the instigation of Walter the Penniless, and Peter the Hermit, who had nothing better to do, and set out to recover the desolate tomb of a dead Christ, instead of going forth to preach the risen glory of

a living and interceding Christ. Incidental evils have accompanied all great gatherings; but if there have been incidental evils, as there may be in this great city at this remarkable time, there will be permanent, it may be, everlasting good.

Every such attempt is an effort of man to reach that perfection which was his first destiny; and it is a confession upon man's part that he feels the want of something, and that he is anxious, and that he will labor, if possible, to recover it. The most beautiful painting we look at, the most finished poem we read, the most glorious structure we contemplate, are efforts of man to reach a perfection of which he has vague and inextinguishable recollections; a perfection, too, the very attempt to reach which is not only a prophecy, but an augury of the fulfilment of God's promise, that this air shall not always resound with the tramp of battle-steeds, the roll of the war-drum, and the sound of the clarion, and that this earth shall not always be steeped in tears, and torn with graves — that sick-beds, and sorrows, and crosses shall not always be — that one day, sooner than some imagine, the New Jerusalem will come down from heaven, and the world shall close as the world began,— with Paradise itself.

The prediction of the Book of Revelation describes a descent upon the earth, not an erection upon it. "John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." It did not grow out of the earth like a flower made of the earth's materials, and destined with the earth to decay, but it comes down from heaven. Its origin is heavenly, its destiny is heavenly; its character is therefore essential and unmingled purity. It comes down, it is said, from heaven, and is planted on the earth, and it shall exhibit

a glory the very reading of whose record is music. When we listen to one reading these last two chapters of the Apocalypse, it is as if we listened to the sweetest strains of the most majestic oratorio. The thoughts are so magnificent, the language so poetical, that all that Shakspeare wrote, or Milton conceived, sink into insignificance in comparison with these grand accents of the son of Zebedee, the fisherman of the lake of Gennesareth: "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," presenting a glory, a magnificence, a splendor without comparison, as it is without companion.

The reading of it suggests contrast. The Great Exhibition of 1862, beautiful and admired as it may be, is nevertheless full of flaws and imperfections. The rains will pierce it; the winds will find crannies to enter at; decay will touch it; it is liable to a thousand contingencies. An earthquake may gulp it down; the hurricane may sweep it away; a single flash of lightning from God's cloud may leave it, and all its glory, a miserable wreck; a disorderly mob — though there is no reason to anticipate that — may break it up; and decay will lay its ten thousand wasting fingers upon it by-and-by. It was inaugurated by the death of its royal patron and presiding genius, as if to show how great is the contrast between man's best and brightest things and God's enduring work; so that it will have started up to show what man can do, and it will have gone away to tell us that all that man does is evanescent, and that we should look not here, but beyond the stars, for "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" a temple in the skies, a fabric that shall not know decay, that shall endure for ever and ever. The building I have spoken of is doomed to decay; the

palace of the age to come shall last for aye. Ruby rocks will be its foundation ; the quarried gems of the earth will be its stones ; the very dust that lies upon it will be the dust of diamonds ; and all there will be perfect as it will be pure. There will be no element of decay ; no hostile power from without ; its origin is from above ; its Guardian will be Omnipotence ; its presidency that of the Prince of Peace, and its duration will be eternity !

Have we any hope of being citizens of that no mean city ? any prospect of entering into that palace not made with hands, and of admiring what the nations will bring into it — their glory, their magnificence, and their riches, throned upon which shall be the kings of the earth, whose crown is an everlasting crown, and whose dominion knoweth no end ?

This divine creation, this apocalyptic Exhibition on the earth — for it is said to “ come down from God out of heaven,” and “ like unto clear glass ” — hath no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it. There will be no obscuring cloud ; no overhanging shadow ; no exhaling mist ; no portion on which bright light shall not shine, and no object that will not bear the brightest light to be concentrated on it. Solomon’s temple was a blot in comparison with this ; and the most magnificent creation of human genius, the concentrated splendor of all the combined cathedrals of England and of Europe, will only be to this great temple of the universe as the tiny light of the lamp is to the sun’s when he shines in his meridian strength.

This great edifice described in the Apocalypse will not be opened with prayer, but with praise. It will be consecrated, not by the presence of an earthly, but by the glory of a heavenly King ; and the hymn that shall be

sung at the opening of this palace in the skies will not be a prophetic, but an accomplished hallelujah : “ The Lord God omnipotent reigneth ; and the kingdoms of this world are ” — not will be — “ become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.” It shall have “ no need,” we are told, “ of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it ; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” A sabbath calm shall repose on it perpetually ; every acre of it shall be holy, every pulse of every inmate a sabbath bell, every breath fragrance, all sounds music, all scenes beauty, and this earth shall yet be the holy chancel of that grand temple which is composed of the whole universe of God ; Christ the High Priest, and we priests and kings to serve and praise him without ceasing. Not a poet’s dream is this, but a Christian’s hope, guaranteed by the oath and unfailing promise of our God.

It is added, as a characteristic of this future temple that “ there shall be no night there.” Night is used in the Scriptures both in the sense of physical darkness and of moral ignorance, or of both. Now, in that future temple there shall be no night ; no dark pall shall be spread on it ; none of its inmates shall be ever compelled to leave it ; no bird of night shall hover over it ; no haze or mist shall conceal its splendors : the Sun of righteousness himself shall shine upon it ; but the sun that shines day by day from his meridian throne shall be of no more use, amid the present and immediate splendors of the Fountain from which he is filled, than the glow-worm at noonday, or the farthing candle amid the blaze of the now noontide sun. There shall be no night there, in this sense, that there shall be no need for resting. We cannot do without night now. If it were ceaseless day, this frail machine



of ours — this wonderful machinery — this strange mysterious engine — this harp with a thousand strings, would be worn out, wasted, and done up. Night comes with its broad cool shadows, and we lie down to obtain rest for our exhausted limbs, and repose for the over-excited and wrought-up mind; but in that better land, in that great palace not made with hands, we shall never weary examining the glories that the nations bring into it; we shall need no night for the repose of the limbs, or to repair the exhaustion of mind. The body shall be a wing, not a weight to the soul; and on unwearied pinion we shall move from space to space, ever striking out new glories, ever smitten with new admiration, ever giving utterance to new praise, ever magnifying Him who is throned on the riches of all, and to whose glory, and for whose pleasure, all things are and were created. There will also be no night in that better rest, in the sense that there will be no ignorance there. Let any of the uninitiated and unartistic go into the Exhibition of 1862, and look upon the exquisite gems from one quarter, the intricate machinery from another, and the textile fabrics from a third, and he will neither understand their meaning, nor history, nor object, nor how and by whom they were originally made. We have but a narrow horizon for our minds to move in; weak eyes to examine, and partial light, or rather, ignorant minds, to bring to bear on the investigation of the subjects submitted to us. And as we walk through this earthly Exhibition, we shall meet with many we do not know, some disposed to plunder us, others willing to help us; many of them men of strange tongues, strange dresses, manners, and habits. But when we shall meet in the House that shall glow in the splendors of an unsetting Sun, all there shall speak their own tongues,

but they shall be to our ears only as different dialects of the same catholic tongue. We shall all praise the same God, and we shall be able each to say "Amen" to the praise of all. And those costumes which in this world are so various shall all be exchanged for robes white and clean, washed in the blood of the Lamb; arrayed in which, we shall hold palms of victory in our hands — the mother meeting the babe she lost in infancy; the friend recognizing in the resurrection features the long-severed friend; circles broken up on earth meeting again, and all made happy in the affection of each other, because all are happy in the presence of God and the Lamb. "There shall be no night there."

It is predicted that the gates of it shall not be shut. There will be no thieves to keep without, and there will be no chance of plunder within. No police force will watch that city that hath foundations; no possibility of what is dishonorable or dishonest can be there. But shut gates does not mean defence, or merely not being open for admission. The expression is a classical phrase. "Shut gates" was a declaration of war, and "Open gates" a technical phrase, that proclaimed the existence of peace. And when it is here said that "the gates of it shall not be shut," it simply means that there shall be no warfare, but perfect, perpetual, and pervading peace. How sadly does this contrast with what we now see! Our present festivals of nations, beautiful as they may be, must yet be kept amid battalions of soldiers. What a significant symptom that the era of peace is not come! And men that walk with olive branches in their hands, know that the barracks are crowded still with soldiers, lest the very possibility of war might occur to disturb a peace which is conventional, not real; temporary, and by truce, not per-

petual, and never to be disturbed. The greatest peace that exists in Europe at the present moment is a peace made up by compact : nations have not gone to rest, they are only bivouacked. Alas ! they are ready each for the battle again. In Europe every man stands with his hand on his sword-hilt, or with a lighted match by the cannon, ready for a battle which looms in the distance, the havoc and issue of which no statesman can calculate. All things show that the era and age of peace, real peace, lasting peace, peace passing understanding, is in the future, not here. The gates are still open ; the soldier is still a reality ; war is still a possibility ; but the true way to put an end to war, and to make the army obsolete, is not, as some most foolishly imagine, to refuse the supplies to the Secretary-at-War, but to give men something better to do, something nobler to think upon. You can drive out a bad passion only by bringing a good one to bear on it ; and, after all, if bad men were kept from war, they would only enter into something more mischievous. It is only in and from the truths of the Bible that permanent, real peace can be given to the human heart. "Great peace have they that keep thy law."

But it is further added that there shall be no curse there. It seems severe language to employ, but however severe it may seem, it is true that we are all born under the curse. This is our state by nature : the world was cursed when man sinned : the instant that man lost his innocence, creation lost its beauty, its harmony, and its blessing. And that curse is to be seen by an inquisitive mind on every product that shall be exposed as the glory of the earth in the structure referred to. There is not a rare or beautiful product of the forge ; there is not an exquisite web or lace wrought with the greatest elabora-

tion of the fingers of skill, that has not seen, in the history of its manufacture, tears, aching fingers, bowed-down backs, ay, and sickness, and famine, and consumption, and death ! Little do we think, as we contemplate the beautiful creations of skill or masterpieces of art, how many heads have ached, and how many graves have been opened, by the weary and worn-out artists and makers. It needs this to temper our excessive idolatry of these things. The curse rests upon the earth ; it rests upon man that walks it ; it rests upon all that man does. But in that better state there will be no curse. True, its glory is the purchase of blood, but that blood was shed eighteen hundred years ago, and the agony of Him that shed it was ended when he cried aloud, " It is finished ; " and the recollection of the price of glory will not make us mourn, but cause us to praise the love of Him who died to restore forfeited Paradise to man, and lost happiness to the human heart.

It is also added that there shall be no more death : *i. e.* decay, disease, waste, wear, or tear. Blessed prophecy ! " There shall be no more death." The most beautiful creations we can examine in the Exposition of all Nations decay while we look at them. There is rust on the purest gold ; there is tarnish on the brightest steel ; there is a worm in the loftiest cedar ; there is moth in the fairest and most costly robes. The purple of Tyre, and the cunning hands that made it, are all gone ; the Phœnician weavers and the artisans of Memphis have all passed away, and nothing but their name is left ; the products of the looms of Sidon, and the creations of the workshops of Ninevah, have all disappeared, and the mere memorial remains ; the skill, the secrets, and the creations of the artisans that Cambyzes brought captives into his country,

and whose factories filled the whole valley of the Euphrates, from Ninevah to Persepolis, have perished from the earth; the glory of Venice is gone; the blades of Toledo and of Damascus have ceased to command the admiration of the world; the carved work of Verbruggen, and the lace and embroidery of Brussels and Valenciennes, are fading; Murillo, Raphael, Carlo Dolce and Titian, Praxiteles and Canova, are dead. Death, decomposition, decay, are carrying on their processes everywhere, while we are expressing to our neighbors the admiration that we feel as we view these wonderful structures. The Prince Consort, who so successfully arranged the Exhibition of 1851, has not been allowed to see finished that of 1862 — God having called him to a house not made with hands. Death rides on the railway, walks amid the glories of the nations, breathes on the brightest, gathers the fairest — graves are his footprints, decay is his work, and disappearance from the earth and forgottenness the experience of all. But in that better rest there shall be no death. Its fairest things will not be its fleetest; its brightest things shall be its longest. Death shall wither no flower there, nor hush one bounding heart, nor leave any traces of his presence. No spider shall weave his web amid the branches, or caterpillar gnaw the leaves of the tree of life; there shall be no interruption of that river of life which makes glad the city of our God, nor one element of sin, decay, death, sorrow, or tears in that New Jerusalem which cometh down from heaven.

It is further added, that “the nations of them that are saved shall bring their glory into it.” “The nations of them that are saved,” is the characteristic of those that shall be inmates of that better rest. The great assemblage of the nations in 1862 cannot be called an assem-



blage of the nations that are saved — would to God it could be really called so ! They meet, it is true, not for battle, but in peace ; and so far it is a contribution towards permanent and lasting peace. But they are the nations, we fear, of some that live in scepticism, of others immersed in superstition, and of others that have no creed, or conscience, or faith, or hope, or holiness of any sort at all. There is wheat, but we fear there will also be many tares. Turk, and Greek, and Syrian, and Russian, from the east ; English, Irish, Scotch, German, Portuguese, French, from the west, meet together, not on the ground of a common faith, but on ground we can so far applaud — of a common brotherhood, sympathising with the beautiful which God has made us to admire, and with the useful that God has given us to employ. But these nations of them that are saved shall bring their glory into this new palace. At present, the glory of the nations is not true glory ; but then the chief glory of the nations will be that which is indeed their glory. Lyons and St. Etienne may bring to London their glory — their silks ; Bohemia its glory — its glass ; Brussels and Valenciennes what they think their glory — their lace ; Prussia its pottery ; Italy its beautiful mosaics ; Algiers its arms. Each nation brings what it thinks its glory, and perhaps that glory is a foretaste of the true glory that shall be. Is that sixtieth chapter of Isaiah a poet's dream ? Is it a mere transcendental prediction ? I believe that these glories, these literal glories, will be in that future state. I do not believe there is anything in a beautiful flower inherently evil, or that there is any iniquity in a brilliant gem, or that there is anything of God's curse inseparable from a precious diamond. All this earth wants is, not to have its matter annihilated, or transformed into something

airy, visionary, or spiritualized; but to have sin, and its corrosive poison, entirely and utterly purged from it, and to feel the consecrating footsteps of the King of kings upon its bosom, and then its deserts shall rejoice, and its solitary places shall blossom as the rose.

I view it as an instalment of the grand result, as an evidences of man's craving of what is to be, and a hint dropped from the skies, that if man can create so fair, and exquisite, and beautiful a thing by his skill, how beautiful, how bright, how glorious will that palace be not made with hands! and how truly may we lift our affections from the glories that so soon will crumble, the beauty that so soon will fade, and set them upon that house eternal in the heavens — that city that hath foundations — that apocalypse of beauty — that panorama of grandeur — “the New Jerusalem, coming from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

I hail the Exhibition of 1862 as an augury of good. I hail it as a means under God of helping onward the victory and the reign of peace. England, America, France, Austria, Spain, have so often met upon the battle-field; so often have brothers drenched the earth with the blood of brothers; that surely that man's heart is not instinct with the noblest feelings of humanity who does not hail a rivalry not of blood — who does not regard with delight a battle-field upon which is heard no sound of clarion or war-drum; on which are seen no “garments rolled in blood,” or any of the accompaniments of battle; but where intellect meets intellect, and it is tried, by intellectual weapons and intellectual strength, which nation is greatest in art, in science, in literature, and in civilization. And, O blessed triumph! if it shall come out that this Old England of ours, this Great Britain of ours, is

the nation that is great in arms, great in science, great in the arts, great in literature, because, what is greater than all, great in the knowledge and the love of God, in sympathy with man, in all that elevates, ennobles, and adorns the character of mankind.

We have no evidence in prophecy that this tenth kingdom that broke from the apostacy ever joined the remaining nine, and if so, it does not come under their curse. And if it does not come under their curse, it may be long reserved for this beautiful gem of ours upon the bosom of the vast ocean to be that land in which freedom finds its firmest footing, humanity its ablest champion, and religion its lasting and most enduring altar. All things lead me to this conclusion. I will not augur evil while there are so many omens of bright and blessed results.

Our title to that house not made with hands, to that city that hath foundations, is not what the Bank of England or the Queen of England can give. The Bank of England can make a rich man; the Queen of England can make a Duke; but God alone can make a Christian. And that title of which the whole Bible is full — the righteousness of God our Saviour — is the only thing we can present that will admit us into that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Have we it? If, standing in Piccadilly, and looking on the vast crowds that rush past day after day to see the glories the nations bring into that mundane edifice, I were to ask any person, "Who are these and whence came they?" I should be answered, "These are French, Germans, Chinese, Austrians, Indians, that have come from west and east, and north and south." But when that grand group shall stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb — that mighty multitude composed of all nations, and kindreds, and

tribes, and tongues — and when it shall be asked by some of the inquiring angels, struck by the sight of these immigrants and colonists who are not natives — for angels alone are natives — and startled by the beauty, and glory, and magnificence of that mighty crowd, “Who are these, and whence came they?” the answer shall not be, “These are French, Germans, Spaniards, Chinese, or Turks;” nor shall it be, “These are Churchmen, or Dissenters; Scotch Churchmen, English Churchmen, Free Church, or some other Church;” but it will be said, as if to pour contempt upon our paltry and perishable distinctions: “These are they that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they in that palace, and stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb; and serve him day and night without ceasing.”

## LECTURE XVIII.

### THE THRONED LAMB.

THE inspiration of the songs of the saved is sacrifice — the cross and the crown, the shadow and the sunshine, the suffering and the glory, are inseparable for ever.

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” — *Revelation v. 12.*

It is worthy of notice that in the commencement of the sublime paragraph from which my theme is taken no man was found able to unroll the sealed and mysterious record of things that were to come till one said to John : “Weep not : behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” Then John casts his eye across the waves of the Ægean Sea ; and, “lo, in the midst of the throne” — which was part of the grand panorama that swept before him — “and of the four beasts” — or four living creatures — “and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain” — the Greek being, “stood a Lamb as if it had been that very moment offered up in sacrifice” — “having seven horns” — the symbols of power — “and seven eyes” — the symbols of omniscience — “which are the seven Spirits of God” — the one



perfect Spirit — “sent forth into all the earth.” John not only sees, but hears: “And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors” — or perfumes, or rather incense — “which are the prayers of saints” — the prayers offered by themselves as saints, and thus presented unto God. “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth;” when the earth shall be restored and enjoy its millennial rest. “I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”

First of all, let me attempt to answer the question why the Redeemer is constantly set forth in the sacred record as the Lamb. We find the first explanation of this name in a now exhausted institution of Levi. Every morning and evening a lamb was taken and slain in the public place appointed for the purpose as the morning and the evening sacrifice. By the one, all the sins of the day were typically forgiven; by the other, all the sins of the night were typically washed out, expiated, and put away. Hence when Jesus appeared in Jerusalem on that day, evidently at the hour of the evening sacrifice, John seeing his approach, calls out to the Jews: “Behold the Lamb;”

as much as to say, That lamb that you are now leading dumb to sacrifice will now cease to be offered; its significance is exhausted; the symbol must be broken up; the true Lamb comes to take the place of the typical lamb; what the one did symbolically the other does really; turn your backs upon the ancient institution, and now and henceforth rivet your hearts' hopes upon the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

Secondly, there was in the institutions of ancient Israel what was called the passover lamb. The story of that memorable night we know well, and no doubt have drawn many a comforting thought from it. It is this: on a memorable night the first-born of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh on the throne to the first-born of the meanest of his subjects, were doomed of God to be stricken, in just retribution for a nation's crimes, in that it persisted in preventing a great purpose being fulfilled, the exodus of the children of Israel. But it came to pass by Divine appointment, that every house on the lintels and the door-posts of which there was sprinkled a little blood, by a piece of hyssop dipped in the blood of a lamb slain by that household on that very night, the angel, as he rushed through Egypt with outspread wing and bated breath, wherever his eye saw blood sprinkled on the lintel, there sacredly stood aloof; for he had no mission to touch the hair of the head of the humblest inmate of that home. But where there was no sprinkling of blood on the door-posts, there he entered, breathed in the face of the first-born, and the flower faded, and the strong man drooped, and there was wailing and lamentation that night in Egypt.

We are told by an apostle: "Christ our passover," our passover Lamb, "is sacrificed for us." What does that

teach us ? That the safety of the sinner's soul this day is in that blood shed 1800 years ago, which is the life ; sprinkled not upon the book, nor upon the pew, nor upon the homestead, but by faith upon the heart ; and in its innermost recesses trusted in, and cherished, and felt to be the reason why God can remain the infinitely holy, the infinitely just, the infinitely true, and yet admit the wickedest and the worst of mankind to all the riches of grace and all the inheritance of glory. The safety of a Christian is not injured by the weakness of his faith. I hear Christians say, My faith often gives way, and I sometimes doubt, and hesitate, and begin to think it is all up with me ; there is no Christianity about me ; I have no hope at all. But still there is a background, notwithstanding this confession, on which the eye of another can clearly read faith and trust, and life, and love notwithstanding. That weak faith shatters your comfort, but does not shake your safety. No doubt, when the father on the lintels of whose home the blood was sprinkled heard the rush of the angel's wing, and the wild wail of sorrow that burst from a hundred neighboring homes as the first-born was stricken down, he must have trembled ; no doubt he clasped his youngest and his only boy more warmly to his heart, as if he could shield him with his strong arms from impending death, fearing the angel might enter and strike there. But the fainting confidence of the father in the protecting efficacy of the blood did not in the least affect his safety. The angel did not say, Is there a weak trust inside this house, and a strong trust inside that ? but, Is the blood upon the lintels and the door-posts ? So when God takes inspection of the condition of his church, he sees weak faith with less comfort, strong faith with more comfort, but weak faith and strong faith equally secure ; not

because the one is so strong, but because in spite of the wavering of the other the blood of sprinkling is on the heart, and trusted in and gloried in there. Then do not think when your faith shakes your Christianity is done for ; do not suppose when a leaf falls that the forests are all to be swept away ; do not think when a pebble drops that thrones and principalities are upset ; do not argue because your faith is weak that the blood of Christ has lost its efficacy, or that the promises of God have no more faithfulness and truth.

Let me turn to this word as it is used in the 53d of Isaiah, where he describes the Redeemer thus : " He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." The trait I notice here is, he was dumb ; in the words of the Gospel, he answered not a word. Why ? There was no plea on the lips of Jesus for escape from the curse which smote him, because he knew that the tainted, and torn, and polluted fleece of all the stray sheep of this world was upon him, and that he came into the world to suffer and to die ; and he knew the sea of agony which he had to sound and wade through in order to reach the shore ; he knew the fire he had to pass through in order to deliver the victim that would otherwise be consumed ; and therefore he was dumb. He asked not to escape ; the cords that knit him to a cross were composed of his own infinite love. It was because he loved us, and would save us in spite of ourselves, in spite of our unworthiness, that he was dumb, that he said nothing for himself, everything for you and me, and the chiefest of sinners. I turn to the apostle Peter, who describes the same precious Saviour in other words, but using the name given in the Apocalypse, where he says : " Ye were not redeemed with cor-

ruptible things, as silver and gold." All the gold and silver buried in the earth in its unpenetrated mines, or struck and sent into currency, could not buy off from ruin one single soul: "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Now why should Peter say, "without blemish and without spot?" It is to call attention to the remarkable phenomenon that the only innocent being, the only blameless and spotless being that ever breathed our air, trod upon our globe, or mingled with the current of our race, was the greatest, by far the greatest sufferer that ever passed through our world. This phenomenon is so striking, so remarkable, that it is inexplicable except upon the hypothesis that he suffered, but not for himself. It would be as great an incongruity that innocence should suffer and die as that Judas Iscariot should be admitted into heaven and be happy forever. The law of God's universe is — perfect innocence is life, happiness, joy, peace, infinite and eternal; and sin is misery, remorse, ruin, death infinite, eternal. If Jesus was what Pilate said he was, what Satan even said he was, what the voice from heaven said he was, what every word he spoke, every deed he did, every step he took, every blessing he left, demonstrated that he was — holy, harmless, undefiled — I ask the rationalist, I ask those who explain away the distinctive doctrines of the Gospel, why was he so great a sufferer? If you could prove to me that Jesus' death was not expiatory and atoning, I can prove to you that there is not a just, a holy, a righteous God in heaven. But the explanation is given that meets the case precisely: "On him were laid the iniquities of us all;" he bore our sins; and in every record that we have of the tears he wept, of



the loneliness he felt — and there was a loneliness in the Saviour unspeakable, for he had no one that could understand him upon earth, or sympathize with him, or enter into the depths and recesses of his heart — let us ever remember it was not the sin of the Jew; it was not the sin of the Gentile; it was my sin and your sin that were expiated there; and because of that tragedy of sorrow and sacrifice on the cross our sins are blotted out and forgiven.

I do not mean that God hates us, and is compelled to forgive us because Christ died; that is a monstrous error; there is no sense, and no Scripture, and no meaning in it; but it is this — God loved us before Christ died just as he loves us now; only as the just ruler of the universe he could not treat sin as he could treat holiness; he could not make heaven a congeries of all that was wicked, and defiled, and evil, and polluted, as well as all that was holy and spotless. I have seen a judge condemn a prisoner to death, and weep while he condemned him. You know that those in authority and influence are obliged to do things while personally and individually their hearts almost break to bursting. Why? Because the higher interests of the country, the higher interests of justice, of righteousness and truth demand it. So it was here: Christ died not to make God love us; but he died because God did so love us; and he died with God so loving us in order that through that act of his, those sufferings which we deserved as sinners, that obedience which we could not render as creatures, God might be what the apostle says, just while he justifies the chiefest of sinners. Such was the character of Christ as set forth by Peter.

I turn to the Apocalypse, and I see the picture still

presented, in a purer and serener light, and on a loftier and more majestic platform. John says he saw before him in the grand panorama the successive sections of which he saw on Patmos, first of all a Lamb, "just as if he had been that very moment killed in sacrifice." What is the idea meant to be conveyed by this? That the memorials of Calvary shine the most conspicuous and splendid amidst the glories of the throne; that what Jesus endured on the cross he has carried up the living reminiscence of into glory; and that the most wonderful scene amidst splendors of which we can form no conception, and which poetic genius must sink when it attempts to describe, the grandest, the noblest, the most glorious of all, is a Lamb just as if he had been slain in sacrifice for our sins; the crucified seen in heaven in the glorified; the lone weeper in Gethsemane throned and crowned; and ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, casting their crowns in flashing showers before the throne of the Lamb, and not saying, but singing, in songs the majesty and the magnificence of which it is impossible for us to realize, but which God himself has attempted to set forth in these striking words: "The voice of a great multitude, the voice of many waters, the voice of many thunders, saying, Alleluia, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth;" or as it is here: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

One can conceive much of that magnificent composition, the Messiah, by Handel, perpetuated even in the realms of glory. We may form an idea from hearing the Hallelujah Chorus what it must be when they that sing are not a handful in a room, but a mighty multitude that no man can number, without a failing heart, without a faltering

voice, without discord; each unloading the deep debt of gratitude that lies upon his heart, and expressing the intense love that has been created there. Oh, what a magnificent roll will that be, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great multitude; and as if that were not enough to express it, as the peal of the reverberating thunder that rolls from hill to hill, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!" But the thought which John specially brings before us in that beautiful sketch is that all that was on the cross is perpetuated amid all the splendors of the throne. The tears he wept are there, sparkling in the unsetting sunshine; the wounds he received are there — if one might use the words of the secular poet, these dumb wounds, eloquent with the records of no mean or transient victory — the hands that were nailed to the cross for us to wield the sceptre of the universe. How amazed will many be to see that He they beheld upon the streets of Jerusalem an outcast, forlorn, solitary man, is now, and was then, and will be for ever and for ever God, the Ruler of the universe, the mighty God, the Prince of Peace, the Father of the age to come.

John saw in the vision which swept past him on the *Ægean* that all creatures in heaven or on earth worshipped and adored the Lamb; the living creatures fell down before the Lamb, and said: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;" others said: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory, and honor, and dominion for ever and ever." If Jesus be not God, explain to me the worship, if you can. If Jesus be not Deity in its most absolute sense, the worship of the age to come, whether here or elsewhere, must be blas-

phemy. But who can doubt that he is so? And if all the redeemed in heaven worship him, surely, surely, we should not refuse to do so. There may be Unitarians in heaven, but they left their Unitarianism behind them upon earth. We exclude none; all are welcome; but they are welcome through faith in a perfect sacrifice; and they are admitted only where the worship is given to Him that loved us, and washed us in his own blood. But there is another part of this picture which is worth referring to; it is this — that one who looked at the procession as it was passing upward was so struck with the novelty of the scene that he said: “Who can these be? who are these?” And one answered him, and said: “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” This great multitude were those that came out of great tribulation; they were sinners, and they washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. Now just try, if you can, for one moment to cast a glance into this chancel of the great cathedral of the universe in which these holy and rejoicing worshippers are. Whom do we see? I see there Peter, who denied three times with an oath that he knew him. I see there, too, Paul, who persecuted and murdered the worshippers of Jesus. I see there Mary Magdalene, and the woman caught in sin, and the thief that hung beside him on the accursed tree. Why are they there? How can such persons be admitted there? What business have they there? How do you explain their being there? Has God renounced his holiness? Has Sinai let go its thunders? Has the law given up its obligations? The devil protests they ought not to be there; he would tell you, if he could speak to you, there must be some mistake; for such persons have no business there at all. We rejoice

to know there is no mistake. An apostle himself describes the character of many of those that are there, when he tells us that "Neither idolaters, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." So Paul says; yet we find such persons actually there worshipping the Lamb. Then how do you explain it? The apostle says: "Such *were* some of you; but ye are washed;" you have washed your robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The devil can quote the apostle's words: "Neither idolaters, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God;" therefore what right have you, Paul, to be there? what right have you, Peter, to be there? what right have you, the chiefest of sinners, to be there? The answer that Peter would give, the answer that Paul does give, the answer that the chiefest of sinners may give, is—Such we were, no doubt about it, and worse than you suppose us to have been; but we are washed; we have washed our robes, and made them clean; we are sanctified, we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Oh, there is no mistake!—the guiltiest, the wickedest, the worst are there. Marvellous love! precious blood! glorious sacrifice!

"Thou dying Lamb, thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power,  
Till all the ransomed church of God  
Be saved, to sin no more."

No; there is no mistake. They have palms in their hands; they struggled, they fought, and they triumphed; there is no mistake, for they stand before the throne, and serve him day and night without ceasing; and "the



Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

There is another feature relating to this spotless Lamb — those that are around him and worship him are not a few, as certain ultra-Calvinists believe; and they are not all, as certain Universalists believe; but they are a vastly larger body than the most sanguine of us are sometimes disposed to admit. Many we shall find there that we, in our pride, conceit, and dogmatism, excluded. We apply tests that are often very erroneous. Some men are always speaking religion, and we think they must necessarily be perfect saints — we may miss them in heaven; and some men rarely say a word (and the deepest thoughts are not spoken, the richest feelings never ebb into expressions); we in our uncharitableness think they never can be there — we shall rejoice, we shall not be surprised, when we meet them with the palm branch, and the golden harp, and the golden crown, mingling in the mighty multitude, not the least accepted worshippers that are there. It is a great multitude. The Jew was a bigot; he thought there was no religion out of his nation; just as some people are bigots now, who think there is no salvation out of their church. But all these, the demarcations of nations, the divisions of churches, were thrown down when the veil of the temple was rent, and the glory, the inner glory, broke upon the outer world. What was a national cistern, refreshing Israel of old, has become now the great fountain, whose inexhaustible streams water and make glad all tongues, kindreds, peoples, and nations. Of old the ears of the ripe wheat were gathered around Jerusalem only; now wherever the wheat is ripe (and, as the old Covenanter said, God still spares the

green, and takes the ripe), be it in east, west, north, or south, it is bound into a sheaf, and it is welcome as an offering before God. We read that "Many shall come from the east and the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;" or in the beautiful words of the Moravian poet, Montgomery —

" Arabia's desert ranger  
To Christ shall bow the knee ;  
And Ethiopia's stranger  
His glory come and see.  
With anthems of devotion,  
Ships from the isles shall meet ;  
And pour the wealth of ocean  
In tribute at his feet.  
Kings shall fall down before him,  
And gold and incense bring ;  
All nations shall adore him ;  
His praise all people sing.  
For he shall have dominion  
O'er river, sea, and shore ;  
Far as the eagle's pinion,  
Or dove's light wing can soar. "

Such is the mighty multitude that will be gathered out of all nations. They sing the song, it is said, of Moses and the Lamb. You recollect the splendid song : " I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously ; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation." Well, now, that song of Moses had its key-note Christ, and at that blissful day the song of Moses shall be merged in the song of the Lamb ; and it will be seen that all true songs that were ever sung from lonely believing hearts were all connected with the grand central key-note, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is said, lastly, in the Apocalypse : " I saw no temple therein ; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." When we read there was no temple where the Lamb was, we seem to feel a deficiency. Take away from England and Scotland their sabbaths, their sanctuaries, with their spires like fingers pointing upward and tapering to the rest that remaineth for the people of God, and you would rob the landscape of its loveliest features. Then it does seem strange that it should be said there was no temple there. But the reason is obvious ; the whole earth, with its mosaic of rock, and wood, and streams, and seas, and flowers, has been consecrated and made the floor of that great temple whose high altar is the Son of God, whose component stones are living stones ; the cement of which is love, knitting all these stones, more beautiful, infinitely more precious, than diamonds, to the great foundation stone ; and in that new temple, of which the earth's floor is the consecrated pavement, there is daily service ; there is nightly service also ; for they serve him day and night without ceasing ; and a hurricane of praise, like the voice of many thunders and as the voice of many waters, ceaselessly rises round the throne of God and of the Lamb ; and the glory of the Lamb, that puts out the light of sun, and moon, and stars, renders all other lights unnecessary. And no more as servants in the cold and wintry outer porch, which is the present state, but worshippers in beauty, in holiness, in peace, those we would have kept, but whom God took because he loved them more, shall meet and mingle and join in that anthem peal which shall never cease, round that high altar, the only altar in the

universe, the Lord Jesus Christ. And then all that redeemed multitude, as they constitute one temple, so they constitute, we are told, one bride. We read, just before the millennial light breaks out in the 20th of Revelation: "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride hath made herself ready." And one of the ministering spirits came and said: "I will show you the bride of the Lamb." What does this mean? It is this — Christ selects all that believe, of all ages, of all generations, all that will wash their robes in his precious blood; that is, all that will believe on him as he is set forth in the Gospel; and makes them his bride. And we are told by the apostle that Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; and that he will present her at that day to himself a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or blemish, or any such thing — his name hers, his rights hers, his glory hers. And the most marvellous fact in God's most marvellous universe — for new marvels are daily discovered by new efforts of science — will be that the Prince of Peace, the King of glory, looked upon us in rags, in wretchedness, in sin, in wickedness, in iniquity, diseased, dying, dead; and made of us his bride, whom he loves with a love that never falters, and crowns with a glory which shall never die, and has identified, notwithstanding all she has been, with himself for ever and ever.

Such then are some of the pictures of the Lamb as he is set forth in the Scriptures. He is spoken of, in conclusion, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. There never was but one way to heaven, never was but one Saviour, never was but one Sacrifice; its virtues extending backward from the Cross to poor Eve, looking on the rose that faded in her hands as her retreating footsteps sounded at the gates of Paradise, and extend-

ing forward to the last generation of human kind. Christ crucified is the central fact, the central date, the grand event in the history of God's universe. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Abraham was a Christian in the dawn ; we are Christians near the high, the ceaseless noon ; both however trusting in the same Saviour.



## LECTURE XIX.

### THE LESSON OF THE DAY.

DOCTRINE leads to duty. Prophecy inspires the present with its hopes. They that look for the glorious morrow learn and live the lesson of to-day.

“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”  
*2 Peter iii. 14*

HERE is the practical duty that flows from all the themes to which we have been directing attention. The words are evidence that these themes are fraught with practical importance — that they are not mere speculations fitted to gratify an itching curiosity — but grand thoughts, suggestive themes, tending to make man wiser, happier, holier, and fitted for the kingdom of heaven.

Now what are “such things,” which the apostle says, ye look for? “Seeing that ye look for such things.” He tells us in the previous part of the chapter: a dissolving earth, under the action of intense heat — an evanishing heavens, before the breath of the Lord of hosts — the elements melting with fervent heat — nature passing into her last transformation with a mighty noise — all things dissolved — God the Saviour descending on the earth — a

new heaven and a new earth, according to his promise in Isaiah lxx., wherein dwelleth righteousness. But, what should be the effect of our looking for all this? Terror? No. Apathy? No. Indifference? No. Giving up all for lost, like men in a wreck on the ocean, and plunging into the wildest excesses? No; but — “Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things,” the logic of these things is, “be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” Here then we have the practical action of this hope: “Seeing that ye look for such things.” If we are not looking for them, we are not acting in accordance with the apostle’s prescription. If then we are looking for these things, where do we look for them? In promise, in prophecy; in the signs of the age, in the phenomena of the day.

Our blessed Lord rebuked the generation in which he lived when he told them, You judge of the weather by the signs in the sky; and yet you are ignorant of and insensible to the signs, the moral and far more important signs of the age in which you live. If then we are looking for these things, we are first of all to be diligent. We look for a new heavens and a new earth; see that we have new hearts and a new nature meet for the mighty transformation. As righteousness is the tenant of the new earth, righteousness must be the tenant of each heart that is to beat on that new earth. Let the Lord our righteousness, Jesus Christ, dwell in every heart, that when he comes, in the beautiful words of the apostle, we may be found of him without spot and blameless in that day. Our looking, therefore, for this, is the exercise of hope.

What are the component elements of Christian character? Faith that looks back; love that looks up; hope

that looks forward. Faith is fed by facts, doctrines, and truths, that grow out of the cross of Christ; love is fed by studying him who so loved us that he died for us, and of whom it is said: "We love him because he first loved us;" and hope is fed by using the promise and the prophecy as a telescopic tube along which we look, and see more clearly and brightly the glory that shines in the distant horizon, destined to overflow with its splendor the length and breadth of the globe. This hope which is now in our hearts — this looking for these things — is a flower gathered from Paradise that is to be; perfuming our hearts with its precious fragrance, and giving the man who looks for the glory that is to come an inner taste of it that is an earnest and a prelibation of it before that glory overtakes him. Hope is the earnest of what is to be; it brings into our hearts the olive branch, to show the waters are assuaged from the face of the earth, and that the new heavens and the new earth are about to dawn.

Are you looking for anything beyond the present? It is the mark of the brute to have its horizon all in the present; it is the mark, as it is the dignity, of the man to look far beyond the visible diurnal sphere, and rising on the wings of hope, to hold communion with things that are unseen, but real and eternal. But alas! there are some that do not believe in these things, and therefore do not think about them; some that believe them, but are indifferent to them; some that do not look for them at all, but look from them, and think we have no business with them. But the apostle says to us Christians, to us believers: "Seeing ye look for these things;" and if 1800 years ago they looked for them, surely now that the 1800 years have swept past we may look for them still more; and looking for them will not only be a refreshment in the

present, but it will prompt to the practice of whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are just, and lovely, and of good report. Accordingly, the apostle says the very first duty that devolves upon those who look for such things is: "Be diligent." What does diligence imply? You know what diligence in business is — early up in the morning; first in the market; all your wits about you; ready honestly to make the best bargain, and to gain the largest profit, and to find the best market. Take the diligence with which men work the world, and import it into that loftier world wherein far more momentous transactions take place. If we are to be diligent, what does it include. First of all, it includes watchfulness. Sleep was the sin of the five foolish virgins; all slept; but their sleep was a sleep preceded by indifference, and indifference followed by destruction from the presence of the Lord. Apathy is scarcely compatible with Christianity. One cannot conceive a Christian to have no feeling in relation to those stupendous truths that are here. Man is not all head, merely for thinking; he is not all heart, merely for feeling; but he is a mixture of both; he is a creature of feeling as well as a creature of reasoning; and the man that does not feel the truths of the Gospel cannot understand them, or does not know them, or does not believe them.

Surely stupendous truths are these — that upon the decision of an hour rests the destiny of eternity; that upon what you and I are to-day may be contingent what we shall enjoy or what we shall suffer for ever. The lost in misery would give the universe for one Sunday of the Son of man. We never know our blessings till we lose them; we do not feel the magnitude of our privileges till these privileges pass from us, and are given to others

bringing forth fruits worthy of them. Let there be no apathy. We deprecate fanaticism; but we demand the fervor of Christian love, the warmth of a regenerated heart, the temperature of heaven in each individual — the earnest of admission to rest for the whole church and family of Christ. If, again, we are to be diligent, it implies that we are to labor. Now while it is quite true that heaven is by grace, it is not the less true it is not given to indolence. Saved by grace does not imply saved without effort. God in saving us freely does not sanction or consecrate indolence and inactivity; on the contrary, every word in the Gospel implies labor: "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life." "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." The effort is yours, hopeless, powerless, if alone; the blessing is God's. The blessing is on the effort, it crowns the effort, and gives you the reward of your works, and yet recognizes no merit, but gives salvation exclusively of grace. There is many a rugged bit of road on the way to heaven; many a heavy storm will beat upon you; many a siren voice will try to seduce you; many a persecutor will seek to turn you back; you will need to be watchful, diligent, prayerful; and remember that it is with heaven as one said of old to a royal personage of mathematics — there is no royal road to heaven. It is a hard, rugged, up-hill struggle; and you must put the stout heart to the stiff hill, and labor and strive, and yet feel that all your toil, and labor, and striving are in themselves utterly worthless, and that by grace alone you can be admitted into the kingdom of heaven.

In the third place, this diligence which the apostle here recommends implies zeal. A man who is not zealous in the sphere in which he is placed in this world will not do



much good. If you wish to be a scholar, you must be zealous; if you wish to be a successful merchant, you must be zealous; if you want to get on in the world in any sense, or in any shape, or to any extent, you must give your heart to the work in which you are engaged. God does not bid a man be idle, indolent, gossiping, trifling, instead of minding his business; he says that if a thing be good, it is right to be zealous in that thing; but if zeal be demanded for the lower level, what zeal is required on that higher one? Zealous in good works let us be; zealous in the worship of God; zealous in the pursuit of every grace; zealous in striving to enter into the kingdom of heaven; zealous in the love of God, in sacrifice for God, in doing good to others, and in making known to the utmost of your power the unsearchable riches of Christ. Depend upon it if you have no permanent love, no zeal, no toil, no diligence, you have not yet entered on the road that leads to immortality and glory. Be diligent: "Wherefore, seeing ye look for such things, be diligent."

He says, in the next place: "that ye may be found without spot and blameless" — "without spot." In two senses that is accomplished. First, we are stained by nature; and so unchangeably stained that as soon may the Ethiopian wash his skin white with soap, or the leopard's spots be changed by nitre, as man's heart be transformed, and purified, and regenerated by anything that man can do or that man can apply. But we need not only a change of nature in order to qualify us for the kingdom of heaven; we need primarily a change of state, that we may have a title and a right of entrance into that kingdom. We are by nature without merit, except the merit of penalty and evil; we are by nature dead in trespasses and

in sins, having no power to justify ourselves; there being no person upon earth, priest, or presbyter, or people, who can justify and pardon us. But, blessed be God! every spot may be washed away in precious blood; every defilement covered with a glorious righteousness; and you and I—sin-stained and ruined as we are, and disfranchised in every sense for the presence of God and for an entrance into heaven—<sup>4</sup> may be presented a glorious church, without spot, or blemish, or any such thing, unto Him that sees flaws in the stars, faults in the angels, yet can see nothing but perfection in them who are clad in the righteousness of the perfect Saviour, Jesus Christ, our God and our Sacrifice. Not only is the external spot thus covered, but the internal spots of our nature are purified. We need two things for heaven; we need a title to it, which we forfeited; and we need a fitness for it, which we lost and without which we never can be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. When we are justified, and pardoned, and absolved, there is a change of state; but we need in addition to that a transformation of nature. It is a great law in the physical world that every orb is made for its inhabitant. There are some of the planets so dense that if you<sup>4</sup> and I were placed upon one of them our own weight would crush us into atoms; that is to say, the attraction of gravity would be so great that we should be crushed by simply being there. There are others of them, again, so little dense that we could not stand or exist upon them; the law being that the orb is made for the inhabitant, and the inhabitant is fitted for the orb. So it is in this lower world: the fish by its organism is fitted for the water; the bird by its structure is fitted for the air; the ox by his structure is fitted for the grass and for the field; and man, by his magnificent and composite

nature, is fitted for those grand functions which more or less imperfectly he seeks to fulfil. So we must be fitted for that new heaven and new earth, the atmosphere of which is righteousness, the streams of which are purity, the songs of which are gratitude, the worship of which never ceases through everlasting ages. Suppose we could be enfranchised and entitled to heaven, but if we were not regenerated and fitted for heaven, it would be no heaven to us ; we could not live in it, or breathe its air, or enter on its joys, or reciprocate its sympathies.

And therefore there is required a total change, first of all, of heart. We shall never get on by lopping off a bad habit here and a bad habit there ; it is well and it is expedient to lop them off ; but as long as the tree is bad, so long bad sprouts will spring from it, and bad fruit, if any, will grow upon it. What is needed is a transforming touch at the very core of human nature ; the quickening breath of heaven penetrating the human heart ; the transforming energy of God at the very centre of our nature ; and then the spring made pure, its streams will be so — the tree made good, its fruit will be fragrant, and beautiful, and precious — the heart being changed, a transforming energy will pass through the eyes, and they will not rest on vanity ; and through the hands, and they will not do wicked works ; and through the ear, and a covenant will be made with it ; and through the feet, and they will walk in the paths of righteousness ; and through the knees, and they will not kneel before Baal, or Mammon, or the gods of this world's Pantheon ; they will bow only before God, the living God. Here is what is wanted — that we may be found without spot ; a raiment washed in the blood of the Lamb, because of which we are entitled to heaven ; not woven by our fingers, nor washed by our tears, nor

purchased by our wealth, nor bequeathed by our forefathers; but bestowed upon us by Christ at once in all its perfection, incapable of addition; so pure that an angel's tear would stain it, and a martyr's holiest blood would defile it; so perfect that he that is clad in it stands before God as Christ stands, without spot. We need next, a transformation of heart, that being entitled to heaven we may be fitted for heaven, and made meet to drink its streams, to breathe its atmosphere, to sit under the shadow of its tree of life, to eat of its blessed fruit, and to join in those songs that are ever new, and yet that never cease. Such then is the second great practical duty.

The third desire is, "that we may be blameless." "Be diligent; that we may be found without spot, and blameless." This word "blameless" has two significations; first, it relates to the condition of the soul in the sight of God and in our own conscience; secondly, it relates to our own conduct and character in the presence of the world and in the eyes of all mankind. We are, first of all, to seek to be blameless; the testimony of our conscience is the evidence of that. If the world blame you, it is a magnificent reply, that crushes and extinguishes all its reproaches — My conscience acquits me; God justifies me; who is he that condemneth? But secondly, we should seek by every effort in our power not only to be internally and really blameless, but outwardly to avoid every possible occasion of incurring the blame, or the reproach, or the censorious remarks of others. We are not only to abstain from evil, that we may be blameless, but we are to abstain from the appearance of evil, that the world may have nothing to fling at us as matter of reproach. It is a painful fact that many excellent Christians, blameless in the sight of God, by their temper, or

by their imprudence, or by their indiscretions, or by their inconsistencies, cause the world to blaspheme, and lead it to suppose that Christianity, the source of all that beautifies and adorns, makes men sour in their tempers, cross in their intercourse with each other, uncourteous, uncivilized, and unpleasant in the midst of the world and in the transaction of this world's duties. We ought to guard against that; we ought to give the world, if possible, no handle. We shall not escape doing so; because the world looks with lynx eyes for the least flaw; and it magnifies that flaw when it discovers it to the very uttermost. But knowing this, let us avoid the appearance of evil; let us seek not only to be blameless before God, which is by far the highest, but let us strive that the inner light may cast forth its pure and radiating splendor; that the inner life may send forth its refreshing streams; that the very world may be constrained to say—That man, though we know nothing of his religion, nor even believe in his Bible, is so just, so upright, so courteous; he takes wrongs with such kindness, forbearance, and tenderness; he speaks so charitably of others; he will not say anything bad of a person if he can only find anything good to say of him—that man must have some inward spring that we know not of; that epistle, that living epistle, is written not with pen and ink, but with something higher; we too, touched by his excellence, charmed by his outer character, will go to the church where he goes, and learn the truths that he hears, and open the Bible that he reads, and study the lessons that he gets there. And thus on the exchange, on the market, in the counting-house, in the shop, on the streets, you may be sending forth from you a silent but transforming power that, reproduced at the judgment-seat of Christ, will reveal to you the magnificent and glorious



fact that you were converting men when you knew it not ; that you were preaching Christ when you thought you were engaged with the world's duties ; and that from you there issued an unconscious influence that by God's blessing transformed thousands that it touched into the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us then strive, seeing we look for such things, not only to be blameless in the view of conscience, blameless in the estimate of God, but blameless before others. And when we find that we have been misapprehended, let us explain to them ; when we find that we have unwillingly, or in the heat of temper, offended or given cause of censure, let us be the very first to apologize. Next to doing what is true, beautiful, and just, is the magnanimous sight of making an apology to another when you have done wrong.

The next thing is, that we may be found not only without spot and blameless, but also " that we may be found of him in peace." All will be found *of* Christ ; but all will not be found *in* Christ. We shall be found of Christ at the judgment-seat on the left hand or on the right ; but they that are found in Christ only are his by grace and his by adoption. It should be our prayer that at that day when we are all found of him, we may be found in him ; not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God, through faith in him ; that we may be found in him, justified, absolved, accepted, and finally glorified. But he says, " that we may be found of him *in peace*." What does that mean ? Not in peace with sin ; no peace with sin — it is a foe with whom we are to wage an exterminating warfare ; no peace with the wicked one — Satan is our enemy ; and our charity is not to embrace in its broadest sympathies him who is a murderer from the beginning. We must not

hate a brother ; we must not hate the worst and the wickedest of humankind ; but the devil we are to hate with all our hearts, to resist him till he flee from us ; never to be at peace with him until he is bound a thousand years, and cast into the bottomless pit for ever. Nor, in the next place, are we to seek to be found of Christ at peace with error. There is no peace with error. It is strange the world cannot understand this. It can understand the warring against poverty, against hunger, against nakedness, by feeding the one and clothing the other ; but it cannot understand your warring with error. And yet error is the cloud that rises from the swamps of the intellect, and clouds the heart, and intercepts the sunshine of heaven. It is quite true living Christianity may be and is compatible with many a sad error ; but there are some errors so deep, so great, that they strike at the very vitals of the Gospel ; and they are incompatible with the acceptance of the way of life, and righteousness, and peace. But we pray that we may be found of him at peace with God ; not because we shut our eyes to his justice, his holiness, his law ; but because we see him in Christ just, and yet justifying them that believe, and at peace with our Christian brethren.

When one looks around on the Christian church, we cannot but admit it is impossible for the most censorious uncharitableness to deny that the differences among real Christians are flimsy as the clouds that sweep across the sky ; whilst the truths which they hold in common are fixed, and glorious, and brilliant as the stars that shine above the clouds for ever and ever. Take all the denominations of Christians ; however much we may differ from one as to the quantity of water to be used at baptism ; or however much we may differ from another as to kneeling,

sitting, or standing at the Lord's table; or however much we may differ from a third as to the modes of worship, whether by a form of words or by a form of thought with changing words — these are immaterial and insignificant differences. We all agree in worshipping the Father, in the name of the Son, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; we all agree in accepting one day in the week for worship, in accepting one Bible; in the necessity, and privilege, and duty of prayer, of praise, of reading the Scriptures; of doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God.

These are the essence of Christianity, and however much our preferences may differ, our essential principles are substantially and eternally one. Wherefore be ye diligent, that ye may be found of him at peace with God, through the blood of sprinkling; at peace with all the children of God, for whom Christ died. But we must add one modifying element; that we are to seek to be found at peace with our brethren of mankind according to a limit laid down by the apostle himself: "As much as lieth in you, if it be possible, live peaceably with all men." Mark the limit, "as much as lieth in you," as a Christian; and if it be possible, consistent with higher duties, then you are to do it. But you are not called upon to dilute one saving truth in order to make it palatable to any, nor to compromise one great duty in order to conciliate the world to its observance; you are not on any account to conceal one essential truth in order that you may make the world less opposed to distinctive and vital Christianity. It is possible to buy peace at too high a price. Sacrifice the greatest prejudice on the altar of the humblest principle for the sake of the peace of the church and the peace of all mankind. We may rest assured that the peace that

springs from compromise ; the peace that rises from the diluting, or the compromising, or the concealing of vital, essential, evangelical Christianity, is peace, peace, when there is no peace. Living truth is the tree ; peace is the blossom that springs from it. Cut down the tree, and you destroy peace and truth together. Let the blossoms of peace perish in the frost or be nipped by the wind ; but take care of truth, the tree, and it will hear the footfall and feel the breath of returning spring ; and other peaceful blossoms will beautify it, and fair and fragrant fruit will grow upon it, and we shall find that we have got the peace of God that passeth all understanding. The peace that we seek must not be like Isaiah's bridge, reaching from Egypt to Asshur ; but like Jacob's ladder, one end touching the throne of God, and the other resting on the earth ; and a world reconciled and a heaven rejoicing, one exchanging intercourse and communion with the other.

Seeing then ye look for these sublime changes, that may be thundering at our doors ; seeing ye look for the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven ; seeing that ye look beyond a new year, that shall be chequered with all the world's trials, and troubles, and griefs, and sorrows, to a new heaven and a new earth, the meeting-place of all that you love, the fireside of your Father, the home of the universe, the joy unutterable, the peace that passeth understanding — seeing ye look for these bright and blessed things, let me beseech you, beloved, to be diligent ; that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless, now and for ever.







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